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THE MEMOIRS OF
ISMAIL KEMAL BEY

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THE MEMOIRS OF ISMAIL KEMAL BEY

EDITED BY

SOMMERVILLE STORY

WITH A PREFACE BY

WILLIAM MORTON FULLERTON

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INTRODUCTION

In prefixing to the "Memoirs" of Ismail Kemal Bey, in guise of "Introduction," a few unnecessary, but, let me hope, not absolutely futile, comments, I am merely keeping a promise solemnly made during the months we passed together in Paris in 1917 and 1918. It was, no doubt, natural enough for Ismail Kemal Bey to suggest some such association. Certainly his book would not have been written but for my urgent insistence. Moreover, too directly and absorbingly involved in matters connected with the progress of the war to offer my friend the constant collaboration which he solicited—and which, in fact, he needed—I was able to provide him with the indispensable assistance which the occasion demanded. These "Memoirs," indeed, are "edited" by Mr. Sommerville Story; and it is a duty both to Ismail Kemal Bey and to Mr. Story to leave no doubt as to what the "editing" in question means.

The making of this book was a laborious process. During its production Ismail Kemal Bey was distracted both by grave personal, often harrowing, problems, and by patriotic preoccupations and intrigues as to the future of his Albanian fatherland. He did not, no doubt he could not, give to its composition his undivided time. His shifting enthusiasms and curiosities, his spasmodic disappearances, even his halting methods when he returned intermittently to the task of assembling his recollections, made an accumulation of extremely unfavourable conditions for the success of the operation in which Mr. Story found himself engaged. Yet, without such assistance as

Mr. Story gave, these "Memoirs" could never have seen the light. Boswell interviewed Johnson with joy for long years. But Johnson usually kept his appointments. Mr. Story interviewed Ismail Kemal Bey for long months, capturing him when he could. Quiet assiduous contacts of steady and fruitful work were followed by long interruptions in which it was inevitable that the hero of the tale should sometimes lose the thread. With an admirable patience the "editor" returned to the task, noting, conscientiously arranging, then as conscientiously submitting to Ismail Kemal Bey for verification and revision, the somewhat disordered, yet always remarkably rich, memories of his interlocutor. The result, in my opinion, given the circumstance, is remarkable. It seems to me amply to justify my insistent appeal to Ismail Kemal Bey to sound the depths of his accumulated experience as an Ottoman Statesman of the old school.

These "Memoirs" are, indeed, something more than the observations of a very wise old Albanian gentleman. They are an extremely personal, exceptionally detached, report concerning an Ottoman world which, however prehistoric it has apparently become, in consequence of the war, is still not so remote as to be without its multiple suggestions, even for the present hour, and for the immediate future. The period in which Ismail Kemal Bey played the essential and interesting part of his life-work recorded in this volume is that of the good old days of the "secret diplomacy" that has been of late so flippantly discredited. My old chief, M. de Blowitz, was wont to say: "Les mémorialistes écartent les conséquences," by which he meant that a certain saline scepticism is the sauce with which to serve up Memoirs and Biographies. M. de Blowitz was right. The first duty of the historian who finds himself obliged to use an autobiography as a document is to discover the real pretext of its existence, exactly why it was written. Now, it should be remembered that Ismail Kemal Bey, who was a friend of the great Midhat Pasha, and a man of genuine "Liberalism," so quickly became, after all, so isolated a figure amid the personages of the Ottoman stage that, in his case at all events, the precautions normally to be taken in the perusal of Memoirs may be considerably diminished without grave risk. At least, let me add what I may to the authority of these particular Memoirs by testifying to the fact that they were certainly not inspired by personal vanity: I repeat that their author would not have undertaken them if he had not been energetically pressed to write them.

However this may be, Ismail Kemal Bey's "Memoirs" are now accessible, and careful study of these pages will convince, I believe, any competent student of international affairs that, if Ismail Kemal Bey's master had followed the beacon lights of policy more than once offered him by that intelligent servitor, such action would have been to the advantage of the Empire, and probably of Europe. It has become the fashion to allow international business to be carried on by politicians who are not even amateurs; whereas not so long ago such business was done by professionals. One excellent interest of Ismail Kemal Bey's book is the way it illustrates the, after all, *a priori* verity that the old method is infinitely the best. In his latter days Ismail Kemal Bey's direct vision had become, no doubt, a somewhat oblique, distorted regard. I remember a score of conversations with him in Paris, at certain critical moments of the German War, in which he foretold the necessary defeat of the Allies. But, I owe it to him immediately to say that his two main arguments were, first, his conviction that, if the War lasted, Russia would collapse exactly as she did collapse, and secondly, his canny scrutiny of the ravages caused on the Continent and in England, and, in fact, all about the planet, by the sophistical formulas of Mr. Wilson. Thus, during the War Ismail Kemal Bey was often discouraging for those of us whose faith in the defeat of Germany never wavered. But, if Ismail Kemal Bey was discouraging, was it not just because his judgment in general was known to be so solid? How avoid being slightly affected by any verdict from a man whose experience of Constantinople, of Middle Europe, of the Balkans, of England, and even of France, had been so varied, prolonged and rich; a man who had tacked so adroitly for so many years amid the difficulties that swarmed like nebulæ in the old cosmopolitan Ottoman world; who had been the intimate of "Chinese" Gordon, Gordon of Khartoum, and the friend of a score of European statesmen; who, as president of the Commission of the Danube, had had the opportunity of probing the motives of the policies of a half-dozen Powers; a man, in a word, who had seen so much and known so many other men, had, in fact, so abundantly and so richly lived, that a habit of general ideas had become natural to him, and that his chief intellectual entertainment was watching how human factors converge and combine to determine resultants of force which rarely reflect conscious intentions? During a friendship of many years, indeed, I do not recall a single instance in which Ismail Kemal Bey, analysing the international situation, displayed that familiar intellectual dishonesty characterised by an ingenious dosing of one's desires with one's real vision, of one's sentiment with one's thought. The realist who, in exile at Prinkipo—Prinkipo, mind you!—wrote in 1892 to his master: "In State affairs it is interest that guides politics and inspires conduct," is the keen-sighted diagnostician of the masterly analysis of Bismarck's Eastern policy viewed in the light of that great Statesman's entire continental plan.

Take for instance the following:

"No historical utterance has been more often quoted than the celebrated remark of Bismarck that the 'Eastern question was not worth the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier.' But, although so often quoted, no historical utterance has ever been the cause of so much ambiguous comment, or has been more constantly misunderstood and misinterpreted. It has even been used to corroborate the views of those who would contrast the alleged prudent policy of Bismarck in cautiously confining his ambitions to the consolidation of a united Germany in Europe with the presumptuous world-policy of his successors under William II, who, heedless of the safe Bismarckian methods, by their violent demonstrations caused the Powers to take alarm and unite against the Pan-Germanist danger.

"In these pages I endeavour to show the workings of the Bismarckian policy with regard to the East. The reader will see the beginnings initiated by Bismarck himself of that logical movement of Pan-Germanist expansion, the consequences of which became patent to all many years later after the great Statesman's disappearance from the political scene, and which have become still more evident in their glaring nakedness in the horrors of the present War."

And take this passage with reference to the war of 1870:

"After the three months' sanguinary struggle between the French and German armies, and after the academical discussion among the representatives of the Powers in London, Bismarck succeeded in imposing his onerous conditions of peace on France, and in making dislocated Europe accept Russia's arbitrary [the Denunciation of the Treaty of Paris] act with the mere reservation of this principle, drawn up at the Conference of London: that in future treaties could only be modified with the common consent of all the signatories. It was the first time that Europe had in such an abject form submitted to seeing a treaty summarily declared invalid when its beneficiary was a weak nation.

"The double news of the conclusion of peace and the decision of the London Conference was received by us in the East with natural satisfaction. Public confidence being re-established, conditions once again became normal. One of the competitors to world domination being set aside, the European equilibrium had now changed, and the three Great Powers, Germany, Great Britain, and Russia, had entered on a new phase of their history. The formation of the German Empire had completely altered the political face of the world, and the Powers found themselves obliged to establish a fresh equilibrium on which their respective interests should be based.

"Germany, which had obtained a kind of hegemony in Europe, now had as her aim to consolidate her work and prepare for her future world-policy. Bismarck never lost time in overweening contemplation of his successes or in resting on his laurels. The greater his achievements, the more he was inclined to take precautions not only to safeguard them, but to prepare for future advances and triumphs. He had now two primary preoccupations—first, to assure the isolation of France and prevent her from having a Government capable of inspiring confidence in the other Powers, and thus obtaining for herself allies against Germany; secondly, to consolidate the good relations of Germany with the other Powers. Feeling that Germany had been all too long in leading-strings to Russia, he now sought to reverse the rôles and deprive Russia of a free hand in the Orient."

If Ismail Kemal Bey was the penetrating political thinker that this and many another passage of the present volume reveal, it was because, as the French say, he had *revenu de beaucoup de choses*, he had boxed the compass of manifold events, his curiosity had fared far afield, he had "returned" therefrom with few illusions. His temper, however, was never cynical. His stoicism was of too philosophic an

Eastern texture to assume the grosser forms, such as the *je m'en fichisme* or the " I should worry " of certain states of mind. Perhaps this is why he had always a certain sympathy for Spain, the Spain of the *mañana.* But, while his disillusionments assumed no cynical shapes they greatly facilitated his insights. There is a particularly characteristic, and even charming, illustration of this in the proud page where he analyses the difference between such " Liberalism " as had been his own and that of Midhat Pasha—what a magnificent tribute, his, to that great Statesman !—and the " Liberalism " of too many a Westerner whose hypocrisy he had discerned :

> " The Liberals of Western Europe seem to me like the heirs to great fortunes, who think only of enjoying the wealth acquired by the efforts and the sacrifices of their ancestors. In these countries Liberalism is only the label of a party or a means of attaining to power. But in the autocratically ruled countries of the East, in which even the thought of Liberal ideas arouses conflict and evokes all kinds of dangers, Liberalism is surrounded with trouble and risk. It never helps anyone to attain to power ; on the contrary, those who espouse such thoughts run the risk of losing position and even their life. These were the risks that Midhat Pasha willingly incurred. He possessed the supreme courage of making known his Liberalism at the moment when any others, having arrived at the height of their ambitions and power, would rather for their own preservation have shown a certain reserve ; for, though a Statesman may espouse Liberalism at the commencement of his career as a means to power, it is rare for one to reveal a Liberal spirit when one has got power, and push it to such a point as to risk losing it all."

When the German War broke, Ismail Kemal Bey, who was well over seventy, beheld in that cataclysm above all an opportunity to end his life logically with Albanian honour. He resolved, in the spirit of his Liberalism of half a century before, but with few enough illusions as to the success of his venture, to utilise, up to the limit of their availability for his own beloved Fatherland, all the doctrinaire principles that were being so lavishly launched from Washington, as from a juggler's cornucopia. He came to Paris to plead the cause of " Albania " before the Peace Conference. But the question was: " Of *what* Albania ? " The helpless Old Man was a symbol of the disillusionment in store for half-a-hundred potential Peoples who had hied to Paris as to a Mecca. What added to the pathos of the spectacle was that, for the sake of the country which he wished to see independent, Ismail Kemal Bey felt bound ambiguously to truckle to Principalities and Powers between whose reciprocally warring interests the pure tint of his own patriotic loyalty inevitably assumed shifting chameleonic shadings. This is inevitable, and it was inevitable as well that other Albanian chieftains, clans, and interests should seek to further their own ambitions by calumniating a rival's motives. As a matter of fact, a secret treaty between Italy and the Allies had virtually banished all hope of real " self-determination " for Albania. But Ismail Kemal Bey hoped against hope, and his hope was in America. I well remember his satisfaction when he brought me—it was some time in February 1918—a fine parchment emanating from a Convention of the " National Party of Albania " that had been held two months before at Worcester, Massachusetts, and establishing his credentials as the representative of the Albanian colony in America, with the mission to " insure and guarantee the complete political and commercial independence of Albania," and " to secure such alterations in the boundaries of Albania as shall include within her limits those lands, or provinces, inhabited almost exclusively by Albanians, and which were unwisely and unjustly severed from her by the Ambassadorial

Conferences in London in 1912 and 1913 and given to Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro."

How expect Ismail Kemal Bey, in accepting this mandate, and the stipend accompanying it, to dash the hopes of his generous compatriots by revealing to them the unsuspected complexities of the task they had thrust upon him, complexities due to the fact that Albanian unity and national integrity had been imperilled, not only by the "Ambassadorial Conferences" of 1912 and 1913, but also, and even more, by the secret assurances given to Italy in 1915 providing for her virtual protectorate of that country? The aged statesman disappeared from Paris, leaving in Mr. Story's hands his unfinished "Memoirs." They are a torso like the State he served. Ismail Kemal Bey died in Italy, his own plan unachieved. But, though his life, æsthetically speaking, was a failure, and a melancholy one, he has left behind him, in these his "Memoirs," a curious and—now that the abdication of America, coupled with the resurrection of Russia, entailing a new Pan-Slavic drive, is determining at Constantinople the sane policy of the maintenance of the integrity of the nugget of the Ottoman Empire—suggestive, and even precious, picture of a vanished world which some of us long ago began to regret.

W. M. F.

Paris,
February 17, 1920.

THE MEMOIRS OF ISMAIL KEMAL BEY

PART I

IN THE SERVICE OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

CHAPTER I

1844—1860

THE VARYING FORTUNES OF AN ALBANIAN FAMILY—TROUBLOUS TIMES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE—THE "LION OF JANINA"—MY BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD—EDUCATION OF A YOUNG ALBANIAN—THE FIRST EXILE

I WAS born in January, 1844, at Valona (or Avlona), the Albanian town where many years later I was to proclaim the independence of my native country. My father was Mahmoud Bey Vlora, my mother Hedié Hanoum, of Argyrokastro. The period of my birth followed the most momentous epoch which the Ottoman Empire, of which Albania was a part, had ever traversed. The collapse of the sovereign power of Ali Pasha of Janina; the constitution of the kingdom of Greece; the recognition of the semi-independent government of Mehemet Ali in Egypt; the entry of the Ottoman Empire into the European Concert, and the corollary of this latter event, the promulgation of the *Hatt of Gulhané*,[1] which inaugurated the era of equality and justice for all the people in the Empire, regardless of race or religion—these were events of great and far-reaching importance. Greece was a sort of wedge inserted into the body of the Empire in Europe, which at any moment might be thrust deeper in a way to dislocate the European body of Turkey and threaten even the stability of the capital itself. At the same time the creation of a Mussulman dynasty in Egypt, forming a centre of Islam opposite to the Hedjaz and the heart of the Arab world, was prejudicial to the Khalifate of the Sultan.

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[1] The *Hatt* (or Rescript) of Gulhané may be called the Magna Charta of the Ottoman people. It is a fundamental law guaranteeing equality to all, without distinction of race or religion, and inviolability of the

The most significant of all these changes, however, was the entry of the Empire into the rank of civilised Powers, and the first step on this new road was the abolition of the régime of disorder. It is unfortunate that the then Sultan and his enlightened counsellors were forced by past events to establish an excessively centralised system, which, defective and vicious in its nature, was in contradiction to the spirit and traditions of the Empire. I venture to believe that if the Sublime Porte, instead of concentrating all the administrative power at Constantinople, had improved the existing system of self-government, ridding it of its abuses, the empire would have made immense progress in its internal administration. The statesmen who at that time presided over the destinies of the Empire went for their sources of inspiration only to the French system, which strikes the imagination and is easily assimilable owing to its theoretical and logical clearness. Hence it is that in Turkey there exists an administrative legislation which

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individual and property. This *Hatt* was read in 1839 by Rechid Pasha, in the presence of the Sultan Abd-ul-Medjid, of the Ambassadors of the Powers, and all the dignitaries and the public, at Gulhané, the immense garden of the Seraglio at Byzantium. By this *Hatt* the Sultan undertook to respect the laws during his lifetime—taking as his witnesses the representatives of the Powers present—and pronounced the anathema of God and the Prophet on any of his descendants who should infringe it in any way. After the reading of the *Hatt* the Sultan went to the hall in which the Standard and Mantle of the Prophet are kept, and took a religious oath to the same effect.

is complete from the theoretical point of view, but absolutely negative in its practical results.

As regards Albania, two main factors made the Government anxious and cautious as to the guiding policy to be followed in that country—first, the risks entailed by the creation of a new state in the neighbourhood, and secondly, the automatic reinstatement of all the powerful Albanian families in their hereditary posts, which had been suspended during the government of Ali Pasha. These two considerations, taken in conjunction with the ties that existed between the chiefs of the Greek insurrection (who were mostly Albanian Christians) and the heads of the Albanian noble families, led the Sublime Porte to pay particular attention to Lower Albania, and to take exceptional measures with regard to that province. What was feared was the possibility of the appearance of another chief after the manner of Ali Pasha.

The founder of the family of Vlora,[1] from which I came, was Sinan Pasha, who after having occupied the post of Grand Vizier, went to Valona in the time of Suleyman the Magnificent, in the capacity of Captain Pasha, or Grand Admiral of the Fleet. He fixed his residence there definitely and ended his days there.

The Albanians after the conquest, and particularly after the conversion of the great mass of the people to Islam, tried to find titles of nobility for their families in connections of Anatolian origin, just as the ancient Greeks pretended that they were descended from noble Egyptian families.

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[1] Albanian noble families take the name of the locality where they are settled or of the founder of the house. When a family is unique in a locality, it is always known by the name of that locality. Thus our family bears the name of Vlora, which is the Albanian name of Valona. These noble families only intermarry with those of other regions; marriages never take place between the noble family and families of lesser rank in the country. The head of a family is regarded as the father of the locality, and in spite of the religious ordinance, the women of the country do not hide their faces before this chief.

But the truth is, our ancestor Sinan Pasha was a pure Albanian; and we are proud to feel that during the Ottoman domination, in spite of much unjust treatment from the Turkish rulers, we served the Empire faithfully, while at the same time preserving pure and undefiled our Albanian patriotism.

Sinan Pasha's descendants continued to enjoy distinguished offices in the Empire all through its subsequent troubled history. They had in their hands more particularly the government of the countries of Berat and Valona, which together formed one of the three Sanjaks (or departments) of the province of Janina. This succession of hereditary power lasted until the famous Ali Pasha became absolute master of Janina.

Our family, on account of its ancient origin and the peculiar character geographically of the country where it held sway, exercised at all times a very great influence in the affairs and the destiny of Albania. For more than four centuries our family enjoyed great consideration from the Ottoman Empire, although also from time to time it suffered greatly from the misdeeds and the capricious tyranny of the Ottoman overlords. Sometimes, when I pass in review the vicissitudes of my ancestors, I am astonished at the fact that, despite such continued repetitions of unjust treatment, this family should have remained attached to the Empire. But men support with more or less resignation misfortunes that, by continual repetition, assume the aspect of fatality. The inhabitants of the townlets surrounding the base of Vesuvius, who are so often buried under the lava belched forth by this terrible volcano, nevertheless return again and again after each catastrophe, and rebuild on the ruins of their former homes. So it was with that political volcano, the Ottoman Empire: its victims, each successive generation, returned again and again to their allegiance.

Ali Pasha, the "Lion of Janina," coming from an obscure family of Tepeleni, had no title at all to play any rôle in Albania.[1] At once cunning, bold, and savage, he began his career as a chief and " receiver " of brigands. Gradually he secured a certain influence in the immediate neighbourhood of his native town. Owing to his having contracted a marriage tie with the family of Delvino,[2] he was able to widen the area of his tyrannical activities; then, having betrayed his father-in-law by denouncing him as a traitor, and causing him to be put to death, he was able to instal himself in his place as head of the Government of Delvino. In good time he also succeeded in seizing the government of Janina. Hesitant before no act of usurpation or crime, he gradually eliminated all the noble families of Albania in order to strengthen his own authority. There still remained our family, which resisted him at Berat and Valona. In order to get them in his power, he first of all managed to contract an alliance by a double marriage of his two sons, Mouktar Pasha and Vely Pasha, with the two daughters of my great-uncle Ibrahim Pasha, governor of the two towns. Then, under the pretence of nullifying the ambitions of the French, who at that time possessed a protectorate over the Ionian Islands, with their dependencies Preveza and Parga on the Albanian littoral, and with a view to protecting the Albanian coast from invasion by them, he declared war against Ibrahim Pasha, assuring the Sublime Porte that this latter was under French influence. The result of this little campaign being favourable to Ali Pasha, Ibrahim Pasha was taken prisoner and incarcerated at Janina, where, after suffering the harshest treatment for twelve years, he died just as Ali Pasha was himself being besieged by the Imperial troops.

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[1] Albania, divided into Upper and Lower Albania, continued to be administered, always under the sovereignty of the Sultans, by the noble families of the country. Among those who ruled in this sort of semi-sovereignty were, at Scutari, in Northern Albania, the family of Bouchat, whose last representative was Mustafa Pasha; for Kossovo there was the family of Pristina and that of Kalkandelen (or Tetovo). In Lower Albania there was first our family for Berat and Valona; and that of Pasha Kallo for Janina. Besides these families there were others who had local authority—sometimes disputed by a rival family in the same locality—such as the family of Toptani at Tiranna, that of Plassa in Central Albania, that of Kaplan Pasha at Argyrokastro, and others more or less influential at Elbassan, Mati, Okhrida, and other towns.

[2] A town of Lower Albania half-way between Argyrokastro and the sea.

In consequence of the temporary disappearance of our family, Ali Pasha became supreme master of Janina, Berat, Valona, Delvino, Argyrokastro, of a portion of Macedonia as far as Monastir, of Thessaly and nearly the whole of continental Greece and Morea. The Sultan, uneasy at this growing power, declared Ali Pasha a rebel and outlaw. An expedition was undertaken against him. His two sons, who had been given the government of Greece and Thessaly, surrendered to the Sultan. Arrested, one at Konia and the other at Ankora, they were beheaded. My grandfather, Ismail Bey, and those who remained of the Albanian nobility, hastened to take part in this campaign against the common aggressor.

After an eighteen months' siege, he could hold out no longer. Hesitating for a long time between the temptation to blow himself up with the garrison by firing the powder magazine under the citadel, and the instinctive wish to live, he finally decided that he preferred life, and threw himself on the Sultan's mercy. He was transferred to the island situated in the lake of Janina, *en route* for Constantinople, and took refuge in the convent of Pantaleimon there, with the famous Bassilikée, his Christian wife.[1] Here, in spite of the parole that had been given, he was attacked by the Ottoman troops, and after a strenuous resistance, in spite of his great age, he was overcome and beheaded.

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[1] Bassilikée was a captive of Ali Pasha who fell into his hands on the destruction of her village at Souli in the Epirus. When the troops of Ali Pasha entered the village, Bassilikée, who was about thirteen or fourteen years of age, threw herself at the feet of the conqueror and offered herself as a sacrifice in order that her mother, brother and sisters might be saved. Ali Pasha, deeply impressed by her self-abnegation and her beauty, kept her captive and gave orders to have the family placed in safety. His admiration changed into ardent love, and Bassilikée

Although his sons had abandoned him, when they threw themselves on the supposed mercy of the Sultan, Ali Pasha had continued to create disorder in Greece by supporting the Armatoles, against whom he had so frequently struggled during his days of power, and most of whom were Christian Albanian chiefs. This movement, while it did not save the " Lion of Janina," after a time developed into a general insurrection with a view to bringing about Greek independence. If Ali Pasha had been less a man of his time and better endowed with political forethought, he would himself have organised this *coup* in time, and Albania and Greece, with the whole of Thessaly and Macedonia, might have become an independent State and a kingdom of great importance.

During this insurrection of the Greeks, my grandfather, Ismail Bey, who had again taken up the administration of Valona, and his cousin, Suleyman Pasha, who had been restored to the government of Berat, took part in the fighting against them at the head of their troops of the Sanjak ; but in consequence of a dispute with the commander-in-chief of the Turkish Army of Missolonghi, they abandoned the cause and returned home.

When the Greek campaign was over and the new kingdom had been constituted, Rechid Pasha, Grand Vizier and Commander-in-chief of the Turkish Army,[1] went to Janina to re-establish order and strengthen the sovereignty of the Sultan in Albania. In order to take vengeance on my grandfather, Rechid Pasha invited him to Janina, assuring

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became his favourite wife and ruler. After his death she remained devotedly attached to his memory. The Sultan Mahmoud, who had caused her to be brought to Constantinople with the survivors of the family of Ali Pasha, wanted to have her in the harem of his Seraglio, but she repulsed his offers and preferred a wandering life abroad.

[1] The same who was later taken prisoner by Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt at Konia.

him that he had been designated as the governor-general of the province. In spite of the warning given him by a number of Albanian chiefs who were at Janina, Ismail Bey, who unfortunately attributed their warnings to jealousy, went there with a force of five hundred men. On their arrival his men were at once billeted in various houses in the town. He himself was requested to go at once to Rechid Pasha in order to be invested in his new functions, a ceremony which would not brook delay. He repaired immediately on horseback with a small suite to the government palace in the famous citadel. The gates closed behind him and the suite, and in the very act of dismounting my grandfather and his attendants were shot down, and he himself was decapitated. After this my father and my three uncles, all young children, were deported with the family, and shut up in the fortress of Berat. Several years intervened before they were allowed to return to Valona. During these years, as Suleyman Pasha was dead, the government of Berat was accorded to the *parvenu* family of Viryoni. The Viryoni were chosen solely in order to weaken and destroy the influence of our family in the country. The same general principles were followed in other parts of Albania, people of obscure origin being pushed forward to the detriment of the old noble families.

Public confidence had scarcely been restored after these changes, which had so seriously shaken the confidence of the Albanians in their rulers, when, about 1848 or 1849, the Sublime Porte decided to apply to Albania the fundamental law known under the name of the *Tanzimat* (promulgated by the *Hatt* of Gulhané), which imposed direct taxes and compulsory military service. These measures, suddenly put into force, were as damaging to the interests of the nobles as they were obnoxious to the general public. The result was a general rising throughout the country. The Turkish Army, sent against us by land and by sea, marched into the country, and fierce fighting ensued during several months, fighting in which the Imperial troops were often beaten. All the Albanian chiefs, prominent among whom were my father and my uncle Selim Pasha, at the head of their adherents and armed forces, took up positions in the most impregnable parts of the country. One of the principal military chiefs of the insurgents was Gion Leka, who had avenged my grandfather, Ismail Bey, by killing the Master of the Robes of Rechid Pasha, while he was boasting of having beheaded Ismail Bey, and who was therefore attached to our family by special ties.

When the Imperial army had succeeded in suppressing the rising, all the chiefs of the aristocracy and the notables who had taken part in the movement were arrested and deported to Konia in Asia Minor. Others were imprisoned at Constantinople. The families of the higher chiefs were deported to Salonica, and to various towns in Macedonia. My father and my uncle Selim Pasha were arrested and taken to Monastir, the headquarters of the Roumelian army corps. My two other uncles were arrested at Valona, when the Turkish regular army, which arrived by boat (the first steamboats to arrive in these regions, called by the Albanians the " sailless vessels "), had already taken possession of the town and port. Their departure naturally caused great trouble in the family. Then came the order for us—my mother, with my brother and sister and myself, who were all little children, and my father's grandmother—to leave the town and start for exile. These events, which upset the whole of Southern Albania, took place when I was so young that I was unable to understand their meaning, and still less able to form any judgment about them. The many comings and goings of my father, my uncles, and the other chieftains of the time, with their numerous retinues, all splendidly equipped, had simply awakened my childish curiosity and amused me, save when, as sometimes happened, there were scenes of bloodshed.

Our departure, with a suite of over fifty Albanian cavaliers, had more the appearance of a festive journey than such a sad exodus. Whither we were going, with what object and for what reason, no one knew. The ardent wish to rejoin our exiled relatives was in the eyes of us children the only attraction attached to this jump into the unknown. The journey took place without official guide and without official escort. We halted at each of the chief towns of Albania, Berat, Elbassan, Okhrida, and Monastir, where we were received by the authorities and the population with every mark of honour. We passed weeks, and in one or two cases even months, in these towns before continuing our journey. After a stay of a fortnight at Monastir, and having left there a cumbersome portion of the suite and the baggage, we left that town and bade adieu to Albania.

My sister and I, despite the pleasure we took in the journey, and the shifting scenes of the countries we passed through, sometimes asked each other what the reasons might be for all this long pilgrimage, and whether we were always to be exiled from our home. As we went farther and farther in a non-Albanian country, where the country itself, the costumes, language, and everything else contrasted so sharply with what we had been accustomed to in Albania, our childish spirits tended to evaporate and a certain sadness and longing took possession of us. This sadness was increased by the death of our grandmother, who succumbed at a *khan*, or inn, *en route*, and was buried at Jenidze. We felt this blow as keenly as our tender years permitted. At Salonica M. Grasset, the French consul, who knew our family when he was consul at Janina, and was a great friend of my father, on learning of our approaching arrival, met us with a coach and took us to the house he had prepared for us. The honours and kindness showered on us by this excellent man caused much curiosity and astonishment among the Turkish population of the town, as they could not understand that a family could be Mussulman and yet not speak Turkish, while they equally failed to comprehend how a Mussulman family could be related to the Christian *Balioz* (or consul), and to them the bestowal of kindness of this sort was only conceivable on the assumption of there being some relationship between us. During the three years of our exile at Salonica, we lived under the direct and active protection of this kindly French consul. His protection was on two particular occasions that I recall of great and memorable value. On one occasion Kiahia Bey, chief of the Cabinet of the Governor-General of Salonica, came to our house with the intention of turning us out and of himself taking possession of it. M. Grasset came quickly to our rescue, and did not leave us until Kiahia Bey had abandoned his project and departed. On another occasion my mother, who was suffering from typhus, was believed to be dead, and M. Grasset came, and as a measure of precaution, placed seals on all the cupboards and boxes just as if we were in reality French protégés.

My mother, young, and in a foreign country as she was, a country of which she knew neither the customs nor the language, showed much tact and capacity in directing the daily life of the family. She established friendly relations both for ourselves and for the families of the Beys of El Bassan, who lived near us during this exile, with the best Salonican families, Mussulman, Christian, or Jewish. During this exile she not only kept the household going, but managed the family estates, sending confidential men to Valona to attend to matters there, and forwarding money to my father at Konia. We children began to accustom ourselves to the life of Salonica. One event only spoiled our stay there, and that was the death of our little brother, Suleyman. To this day, whenever I go to Salonica, I always make a point of visiting his little marble tomb in the courtyard of the Mosque of Ortaj.

The severe measures adopted by the Sublime Porte against the Albanians, while their object was the very praiseworthy one of general reforms in the Empire, nevertheless concealed the perpetual desire of Turkish chauvinists to bring about the unification of all the races in the Empire. Looking back on these events from the time when I am now writing, it would almost seem to have been the beginning of the political programme of the Young Turks, with this difference, that they were directed by Rechid Pasha, the author of the *Tanzimat*, and a group of men of great talent and patriotism who made their appearance at this time, and who would have done honour to any country in the world. The political error they had made and its probable consequences having been recognised, a change of feeling and of policy towards Albania was decided on. Before proclaiming a general amnesty, the new intentions of the Imperial Government were to be manifested, and as a sort of pledge of the sincerity of these intentions, there were chosen as Governor-General of Lower Albania (with Janina as residence), Ismail Rahmy Pasha, grandson of the famous Ali Pasha of Janina, and as Governor-General of Upper Albania (with Prisrent as residence), Ismail Pasha Plassa.

On their way to take up their posts the two Governors-General both came to Salonica. As the one was my paternal uncle and the other my maternal uncle, they visited our family and brought us the good news of the Sublime Porte's new Albanian policy, assuring us at the same time that we should shortly be allowed to return to our country. As a matter of fact, in less than two months we were again permitted, as were the other nobles, to return to Albania, and we went home to Valona. A little after our arrival, first my father, and then my uncle, returned to their homes, as did also the other survivors among the deported chiefs and imprisoned notables. Only my uncle Selim Pasha and the famous warrior chieftain Tchelo Pitsari, being considered by the Government as elements of danger, were obliged to stay for some time in Thessaly.

Our return to Valona was the signal for the automatic departure of the interim governor, and the administration of the country again passed to my father as head of the family. We found our house almost destroyed. It had been occupied during our absence by the governor, who, at the news of our approaching return, broke up everything, and took away with him whatever articles had any value. We had to stay for several weeks in the house of one of the notables of Valona while our house was again being prepared to receive us. The population acclaimed our return with great joy, and those who on our departure for exile had bought furniture and other articles, now brought them back to us and offered them as presents.

At Salonica I had been sent to the primary school, and I found later on that it was a great advantage to me to have learned Turkish[1] as a child. On our return to Valona I continued my study of this language, and was also taught Italian by a refugee from that country. Apart from these studies, I received a purely Albanian education, under the guidance of my father and mother, especially the latter, who was very anxious that I should become a perfect Albanian. My father, who had received a European education, which for his time was an extraordinary thing, could read and write Turkish, Italian, and Greek ; he understood French, and was well versed in the literatures of the Western nations, with which he had frequent relations. He sought, from my earliest years, to inculcate in me a taste for European culture.

The chief elements in the education of a young Albanian of the period were horse-riding, shooting, and hunting. At each of the four seasons I was sent to make a horseback tour in the interior of the country, accompanied by my two tutors and by young companions of my age, and with a numerous suite. On these occasions I visited the various villages and was the guest of the notables, and there were all kinds of festivities, especially the performance of the national dances, which formed a part of youthful education. In the hunting season I frequently rode to hounds, every man in comfortable circumstances in those days keeping a pack of dogs. Hare-hunting was carried on, especially with a view to exercise in horsemanship. Our principal sport with the gun was shooting wild duck and woodcock. Another sport was carried on in the month of May, when we went up in the mountains to catch partridges with nets. Behind the nets, in cages, were placed female partridges, and these, when they called, attracted the male birds, which were separated from the females when sitting. My suite consisted of young men of the household service and professional hunters. There were no paid upper servants. Young men from the families of the notables were attached to the service of the chief family in the country in an entirely honorary capacity as a part of their education or apprenticeship. This practice enabled them to take part in the events of the day, to learn manners and good breeding, and to get an acquaintance with public affairs. (Only grooms, coachmen, and cooks were paid and treated as servants.) All these young men were dressed in the national costume of rich embroidered cloth or velvet, and armed with pistols and yataghans in silver-gilt, which they carried in embroidered leather belts. Most of them possessed their own saddle horses, and the Beys at fêtes and on other occasions made gifts to them of arms and similar objects. The female servitors of the household were also young girls of the country, mostly peasants from the villages, and never from the families of the notables. They received no wages, but remained in the service of the family until they married, their marriages being arranged and organised by the Beys, who bore all the cost, and continued later to interest themselves in the future of the couple. It is a pity that the so-called progress of our time has brought about the disappearance of these interesting patriarchial customs, which created real ties of attachment between the nobility and the people of the country.

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[1] Turkish is in no way similar to Albanian (which is an Aryan tongue), and was at that time not known at all among the Albanians. Even Ali Pasha could hardly speak Turkish, and his rescripts and orders were written on small slips of paper in Greek, having simply a seal in Turkish on which was his name, Ali.

It was with the object of further enlarging my experience and learning good national habits of life that my father thought it useful to take me with him to Janina, where I was presented to the Governor-General and the various dignitaries and consuls. During this stay of ours at Janina, war was declared against Russia. My father, in consequence, received orders to go back and enrol men capable of bearing arms against the Russians, and we returned to Valona. More than 1,500 men were enrolled there, but the known intention of the Greeks to invade Thessaly and the Epirus compelled Turkey to keep the Albanian recruits on the spot in view of such an eventuality.

A little while later the Greek Andartes, under the command of Greek generals and officers, invaded Thessaly and the Epirus. My father left at once with his troops from Valona to join the Turkish commander and the High Commissioner, who was the celebrated Fuad Effendi, ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs (later Fuad Pasha, Grand Vizier). The Greeks, under the command of General Grivas, had fortified themselves at Metzovo. Attacked by my father's troops, they were beaten and driven out of the place, which had seemed to be impregnable, and the whole country was cleared and order restored. For this service, Fuad Pasha awarded my father a sword of honour and honorary civil rank. Later, as commander of the Albanian militia, he was given the task of keeping order in the regions which had been the scene of the trouble.

During the absence of my father, the government was carried on by my uncle, Selim Pasha. During this time we at Valona received two interesting visits—those of the Archduke Maximilian, afterwards Emperor of Mexico, and of the officers of the French fleet, *en route* for the Crimea. As I was now the only male child of the family, although still quite young, my uncle always kept me with him, and I was one of the party which made the official visit to the Archduke on board the Austrian warship. He received us in a splendidly appointed saloon, where he was waiting with the captain and officers of the vessel and his suite, and we were struck both with his charming manners and his physical presence. He was a very handsome youth of twenty years of age, with refined features, an exception to the rest of the Hapsburg family, who are somewhat disfigured by their prominent lips. Next day the Archduke returned our visit, accompanied by his large and brilliant suite.

The visit of the French fleet was the occasion of an episode that I have never forgotten. Some Albanian ragamuffins, who had " abstracted " a few provisions which the French sailors were carrying from the town, were caught and publicly beaten by order of my uncle. Their cries and groans so touched my childish heart that I ran to my uncle, threw my arms around him, and implored him to stop the bastinado. As a result of these two visits my family had two interesting souvenirs—a watch in enamel, ornamented with his monogram in brilliants, given by the Archduke; and a souvenir of the French fleet which was still more precious—a medal that had just been struck in memory of the Turkish sailors killed in the destruction of the Turkish Fleet by the Russian Fleet at Sinope, and which bore this inscription—" Europe, they died for thee ! "

About this time, my maternal grandfather having died, my mother went to Janina to be present at the family mourning. I accompanied her, and a little later entered upon my studies there at the Zossimea Gymnasium.[1] As I was the first, and, at the time, the only Albanian Mussulman pupil, I was the object of special consideration not only at the hands of my school-fellows, but also from the professors. I have the very kindest memories of my teachers, and owe a deep debt of gratitude to the memory of Omer Effendi and of Professor Tsima, who both came each day to the house between their classes to give me extra lessons, the one in Arabic and the other in French. A thing that amused me in those days was the persistence with which the good Greek priest, who came on the first of every month, in accordance with the custom, to bless the school and sprinkle it with holy water, always (a little maliciously) presented the cross to me, although he knew that I invariably withdrew.

Towards the end of the last scholastic year, when we were about to undergo the final examinations, my father returned to Janina from Constantinople, and told me of the desire of my great-uncle, Ismail Pasha Plassa, who was living in retirement in the capital, and who had no male heir, and also of the express wish of Fuad Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs, that I should go to Constantinople—wishes that he made me comply with. The headmaster and the other professors, out of pure kindness, put me at once through the examinations, and awarded me the regular diploma, with an extra certificate of good conduct. So I left the Gymnasium, after having gone through my "humanities"—ancient Greek and Latin—and possessing a knowledge of physical sciences and mathematics. I had a special aptitude for mathematics, and had worked out several themes which my professor greatly appreciated.

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[1] This famous school was the foundation of four Christian brothers of this name, who, having made fortunes in Russia, decided not to marry, but to devote the whole of their joint wealth to the establishment of the school. It was one of the most brilliant Greek centres of education in the country.

When I think over the years of my youth and my studies, I am convinced that there exists some co-relation between one's early surroundings and one's later destiny, though I should be at pains to explain the law that governs the connection. Who shall say whether one's surroundings shape one's destiny, or whether, on the other hand, one's surroundings are created by promise of the future destiny? My mind was fed at a very early age by the contemplation of souvenirs of the greatness of France. The lamp which lit up my cradle was fixed upon a statue of Napoleon the Great; almost my first toys were drawings representing the great deeds of Napoleon, and I think the first of the childish questions which I put to my father was the meaning of the globe that the great Emperor wore on his head. The French consuls in Albania, men like Grasset, Bertrand, and, later, Hecquard, French consul at Scutari, whose studies on Upper Albania[1] were greatly appreciated, were often guests at our house.

On the other hand, the English at that time occupied Corfu, almost opposite the port of Valona. Officers from the garrison there, and other tourists of distinction, who often arrived in yachts, used to come to Valona for the hunting and shooting which the country afforded, and astonished every one by the nobility of their bearing and their generosity. My father was in the habit of receiving them and accompanying them on their hunting expeditions, while also he often went to visit these distinguished strangers at Corfu.

It seems to me that all these facts had a great deal to do with laying the foundations in early life of my attachment to France and Great Britain. Another fact that had its effect upon my mind, as it greatly struck me at the time, was when I found on making the usual study of ancient mythology, that the stories which my old Albanian nurse, a Mussulman, had related to me were all literally the Greek fables, such as the scene between Ulysses and Achilles at the court of the King of Scyros, the judgment of Paris on Mount Scyros, and so on. I was exceptionally fortunate in having as professors of the literature and history of ancient Greece men who were among the most distinguished of the time, who took the trouble not merely to teach me the classical authors as lessons, but made me live in this atmosphere of liberty of the ancient Greek world.

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[1] "Histoire et Description de la Haute Albanie" (1864).

CHAPTER II

1860–1867

ENTRY INTO POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC LIFE—EARLY CAREER AT JANINA—UNDER MIDHAT PASHA AT RUSTCHUK—MIDHAT PASHA, REFORMER AND ADMINISTRATOR—ROUMANIA A PRINCIPALITY—BULGARIAN RISINGS—EUROPEAN JOURNEY OF ABD-UL-AZIZ—MY MARRIAGE

IT was in the month of May, 1860, that I left Janina for Constantinople, via Thessaly and Salonica. I crossed Thessaly on horseback, and went from Volo to Constantinople by boat, staying a couple of days at Salonica, so that the entire journey lasted ten days. On my arrival in the capital, I found that events of a personal as well as a political character had occurred to upset my plans. My great-uncle, Ismail Pasha Plassa, was dead. The Grand Vizier, Kebrisli Mehmed Pasha,[1] had left for a tour of inspection in European Turkey, and Fuad Pasha, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, upon whose aid I was counting, was about to start for Syria, where the great massacre of Christians had just taken place in the province of Lebanon. The highest posts in the Empire were therefore being directed by subordinates. It was Aali Pasha who was in temporary possession of the Grand Vizierate, while the temporary Minister for Foreign Affairs was Safed Effendi, later Safed Pasha.

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[1] A native of Cyprus. Made his military studies in Europe. After being marshal and commander of different army corps, was ambassador to London and later Grand Vizier.

Guiridli Mustapha Pasha,[1] a former Grand Vizier, who was also an Albanian and a relative of my mother's, took me to live with him and his sons. Fuad Pasha gave me a post in the translations bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where I continued my studies of law under Professor Emine Effendi, a Prussian renegade and director of the library of the Ministry.

Prince Kouza had just arrived at Constantinople to be invested as hospodar of the twin principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, and to present his homage to the Sultan. Special interest attached to his visit, because Prince Kouza, a Roumanian by birth, was the first to be appointed prince of the two principalities, each having hitherto had its own hospodar. I was present at the official visit which the Prince paid to Mustapha Pasha as a Minister without portfolio. I noticed that the Prince addressed Mustapha Pasha in pure and good Greek, a language which was well-known at that time to all Roumanians of distinction.

About this time Napoleon III asked for the recall of Ahmed Vefik Effendi, Turkish Ambassador in Paris (later Pasha and Grand Vizier), who had displeased the Emperor owing to his character and his attitude. Vely Pasha, son of Mustapha Pasha, was, for the second time, appointed Ambassador at Paris, being *persona grata* at the Court of the Tuileries. I was given the post of attaché to the Embassy, but at the moment of the mission's departure I received the sad news of the death of my sister, and was obliged to leave at once for Janina. In consequence of this bereavement in the family, my mother strongly opposed my leaving her again, and I had to remain at Janina.

A week after my arrival there came the news of the death of the Sultan Abd-ul-Medjid, who was seriously ill when I left the capital. The people received the news of the accession of his successor, Abd-ul-Aziz, with joy and confidence. They had great hopes of the new Sovereign, who was only thirty years of age, and was hardy and a sportsman. It was expected that he would carry out important reforms, especially in the army and navy. Abd-ul-Aziz was nine years of age when his father the Sultan Mahmoud II died. His brother, Abd-ul-Medjid, when he mounted the throne, far from seeing in Aziz a rival, treated him with the greatest affection, leaving him free to develop his aptitudes and to satisfy his tastes. The young prince loved all sports—wrestling, hunting, swimming, and yachting, in which he excelled, and which doubtless helped to explain his passion for seafaring interests in later life. He was the only one of his race who became robust and strong with maturity. His strength indeed was herculean, but chiefly in his arms. One day when he was at Tchamlidja, above Scutari, nobody was able to open the big door of the palace. Abd-ul-Aziz took the huge key, and with a violent effort wrenched it open between his fingers.

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[1] A native of Poyan, a small town in Central Albania, brother of one of the companions of the famous Mehemet Ali of Egypt. Was Governor-General of Crete during the long period this island was administered by the Viceroy of Egypt. The Sultan Medjid, after his visit to the island, invited him to Constantinople, and for some time he was Grand Vizier.

At Janina, Akif Pasha, the Governor-General, took me into the service of his government as assistant director of political affairs. Akif Pasha, head of one of the noblest families of Upper Albania, was a true type of Albanian gentleman, and at the same time possessed all the best qualities of a statesman. Towards the end of the month of September, 1862, the Governor-General decided to undertake a trip through Albania. He asked me to accompany him, and I was very pleased to have the opportunity of revisiting my native country again after eight years of absence. So, leaving Janina, we first went to Voshtina, a small town which was the chief place in the district of Pogohia, on the frontier line between the Greek and Albanian elements. While we were there, Malik Pasha, grandson of the famous Shanisha, sister of Ali Pasha of Janina, came to visit Akif Pasha and invite him to his house at Libohovo, which was then a fortress, built in the time of his grandmother. We accordingly went there next day, and left two days later for Argyrokastro. Everything was ready for continuing this journey, which I so much desired when, without my knowing why, at sunset we started on the return to Janina. It was not until we reached Janina that I learned the reason for our return. While King Otto had been on a tour of inspection, the army had revolted, his palace at Athens had been sacked, and the king dethroned. The Governor-General had been ordered to return to his post, and to take the measures rendered necessary by this extraordinary occurrence.

Akif Pasha's successors in the post of Governor-General were Husny Pasha, a very clever *policier*, who was afterwards Minister of Police at Constantinople; Dervisch Pasha, a soldier of much ability, who was afterwards transferred to Asia as Commander-in-Chief of the Fourth Army Corps, and Kaiserli Ahmed Pasha, an admiral, who by an extraordinary series of chances had risen from being a simple sailor to the highest naval rank, although he possessed no instruction whatever. Kaiserli Ahmed Pasha's manner of governing was primitive and simple in the extreme. An official "act," which had passed through several of the Government offices and bore a multiplicity of references and signatures, often so irritated this bluff sailor that he tore it up incontinently because it seemed to be "queer." One day a Greek priest was presented to him with a paper concerning some property of his that was to be the object of the Governor-General's decree, so that his titles might be delivered to him. As the document had passed through all the competent bureaux and bore their various stamps, all this writing so annoyed the Pasha that in a rage he tore the document in pieces and threw them to the floor. The poor priest picked up the fragments, the official of the bureau intervened to explain the affair, and the fragments were pasted together again in a condition to receive the Governor's authorisation.

Another amusing incident has remained in my memory. The dragoman of the Russian consul one day pushed his way into the Governor-General's office, in spite of the *consigne,* and the Pasha in a fury bade him in a rough and insulting manner to begone. The consul, indignant at this treatment of his subordinate, asked me to go and see him about the matter, and told me he did not want to make a diplomatic question of it, since only a week before he had asked for a decoration for his Excellency from his Government. I went to the Governor-General, and asked him to take steps to arrange the affair. This only renewed his fury, and he told me to assure the consul that if the dragoman came again he would break his other leg (the dragoman being lame in one leg). Just as I was leaving the apartment, however, the Pasha called me back, and said, "Arrange the matter yourself, and don't worry them with my irritability." The consul accepted my explanations, and the incident was closed. In spite of his blustering and somewhat "impossible" character, the Pasha was, nevertheless, possessed of a certain real humility and piety that were remarkable. Every evening, before going to bed, he prostrated himself, and in a loud voice implored the divine aid for "this poor Ahmed, who is so ignorant and incapable."

I remained in the service of these successive Governors-General until 1864. About this time, at the wish of my mother, who was anxious to see me settled, I married for the first time. My wife was a young widow of Konitza, but she died after the death of a daughter she had borne me in the first year of our married life.

Though I was happy enough in my position, which for my age was a very enviable one, through an intrigue started against me by some persons in the entourage of the Governor-General, I was forced to quit my post and Janina at the same time. It was not without regret that I left Janina, for the place had a double charm and interest for me. It was the town where I had made my studies, and it was also a region wherein, at every step, I recognised vestiges of that ancient pre-Hellenic, or Pelasgic, civilisation, which the Albanian race had every right to claim as its own, and which was the fount whence Hellenic civilisation had sprung. Among the agreeable and interesting souvenirs I cherish of this period, was a visit I made to a locality which afterwards proved to be the famous sanctuary of Dodona. It was known that the first oracle of antiquity, that of Dodona, had been in this neighbourhood, though no one had been able to fix the exact locality. During an excursion to the property of a friend at the village of Melingouss, I was shown some ruins of considerable importance, with sites and points which reminded me of the descriptions of the position of Dodona. The mountain of Tmarus dominating the ruins, the secular oaks, and a well of very ancient construction made me feel sure that we were actually in the ruins of Dodona. Ten years after the French scientific mission, which had gone to Janina, and declared that any search for the site of Dodona in that region was chimerical, I was at Valona with a friend of my childhood, Mr. Constantin Karapanos, to whom I told my impressions about the ruins. Karapanos, always enterprising, soon afterwards started excavations, which brought to light the sanctuary, and a quantity of archæological treasure of exceptional value.

I now went to Larissa at the invitation of my uncle, Ismail Rahmy Pasha, Governor-General of Thessaly, who appointed me chief of his cabinet, and treated me as a member of his own family. This pleasant life, however, did not last long. Towards the autumn of the same year a band of Greek brigands attacked the Turkish village of Dibagly, on the frontier, burnt several houses, and made off with some young Turkish girls. I accompanied the Pasha, who left at once with a troop of cavalry for Pharsala, the chief town of the district in which the village attacked was situated. Our expedition, however, was only effectual in forcing the release of the young captives, for the brigands themselves took refuge in their own country. The material damage caused was paid for out of the Imperial Treasury. This incident had very disagreeable consequences, both in the district and at Constantinople. Colonel Mehmed Ali Bey, a Prussian renegade, later Marshal, and the second delegate of Turkey at the Berlin Congress, came from the capital on a special mission of inquiry, one of the results of which was the revocation of my uncle, the Governor-General. I passed the winter with him at his magnificent estate at Trikkala, and in the spring of 1865 we left for Constantinople. While we were at Volo waiting for the boat which was to take us, the Duke of Connaught, who was on a voyage of study, arrived on board the royal yacht escorted by three warships. We offered him horses and other things necessary for the ascent of Mount Pelion, and for the visit to the site of the nuptials of Peleus with Thetis, where the Golden Apple thrown into the Olympian banquet was the cause of the Trojan war. The next day was the fifteenth birthday of the young Prince, and the Pasha went on board to offer congratulations, I accompanying him. The prince, whose appearance and manners charmed us, was so timid, however, that he left the whole of the conversation to his tutor.

At Constantinople I resumed my work in the translations bureau of the Sublime Porte. It was the first time I had been in a big town in which cholera was raging for months and making awful ravages. Before the epidemic was overcome, the fatal cases amounted to more than 2,500 per day, but suddenly it ceased with the great fire at Stamboul, which in the course of twenty-four hours destroyed the most important part of the capital.

I had the pleasure of receiving my father at Constantinople, but my joy, alas! did not last long, for my dear father died there at the age of forty-four. His loss was a very painful blow for me and the family. Fuad Pasha, who was then Grand Vizier and Minister for War, had always manifested special kindness towards my father, and during his illness he was very kind and attentive. After his death he summoned me to him to console me, and promised me any post I might choose.

I was about to be appointed Secretary-General of the Government of Janina when I received an offer from Midhat Pasha, then Governor-General of the Danube Vilayet (the Bulgaria of to-day), of a very desirable post at Rustchuk, the chief town of the Vilayet. In the month of May, 1866, I left Constantinople for the Danube to enter upon my new duties. Midhat Pasha was away when I arrived at Rustchuk. Events in Roumania had become more and more complicated, and, as Governor-General of the country bordering on Roumania, he had been told to take all the precautions which the circumstances required. He had therefore undertaken a tour of inspection in the Lower Danube country. On his return some ten days after my arrival, he received me with special marks of kindness, and his confidence in me increased daily. Besides the pleasure I took in my official position, I also had the advantage of being with my uncle, Mustafa Bey Vlora, who was deputy to the Governor-General.

Two months previously Prince Kouza had been forced to abdicate, and the princely lieutenancy (or Regency of three) who governed the country with the National Ministry had decided to choose as his successor a foreign prince. Prince Charles of Hohenzollern (later the first King of Roumania), in spite of the hesitation of King William, chief of the house, had accepted the throne, and in the latter part of the month of May entered Roumania, having crossed Austria-Hungary under the name of Carol Ettinger. The Porte protested, and asked the Conference which had met in Paris on this subject for authority to occupy the principalities militarily. A *corps d'armée* was concentrated at Rustchuk under the command of the famous Sirdar Omer Pasha (who had been Generalissimo of the Turkish Army during the Crimean war). Roumania, on the other hand, collected her armed forces, and the larger part of them were massed at Giurgeovo, opposite Rustchuk. In spite of the presence of the two armies almost facing each other, communications between the two countries continued normal. I went over to Giurgeovo to see the commander of the Roumanian forces, Colonel Karalambi, who was one of the three princely lieutenants before Prince Charles' arrival, and who was of Albanian origin. During the conversation at luncheon the colonel did not conceal from me his lack of confidence in his troops; he expected them to take to flight at the first sign of battle. I repeated this opinion of the Roumanian commander to Omer Pasha, who was in no way surprised, as he had already had opportunities of judging of the military value of the Roumanian troops when he entered Bucharest in 1849.

The Paris Conference having refused the request of the Porte, and Prince Jean Ghika, the Roumanian Minister for War, having prepared the way for an entente with Aali Pasha, the Turkish troops were withdrawn. Prince Charles, being now recognised as Prince of Roumania, came to Rustchuk in October, *en route* for Constantinople, and was received with special honours by Midhat Pasha and the civil and military authorities. He was entertained at luncheon by Midhat Pasha, and the same day left for Varna, where the Imperial yacht was waiting to take him to the capital. Odian Effendi, political director of the Vilayet, and I accompanied him to Varna.

Midhat Pasha, who had an absolute genius for administration, had been ordered by the Sultan to apply as an experiment the new organic law for the administration of Turkey in the most important province, which was then the Danube Vilayet, containing the portion of Bulgaria which is to-day situated to the north of the Balkan chain, the Dobrudja, Sofia, and Nish. In less than two years he had succeeded in organising the country and in making of it a prosperous and civilised province which enjoyed absolute order and security. The entire country was provided with roads, the solidity of whose construction is still remarkable to-day among the roads made later by Bulgaria and Serbia. The Danube was joined to the Black Sea by a railway from Rustchuk to Varna, built and run by an English company. A special administration was set up for the navigation of the Danube and boats built for the purpose, to compete with the Austrian boats which had hitherto had the monopoly of this service. Everywhere there were hospitals, schools of arts and crafts, and other similar institutions. The commerce and industry, as well as the agriculture of the country, assumed remarkable developments on account of the financial support given by the agricultural and industrial banks founded by the Government. The civil, financial, and judicial administration were established on solid bases owing to the participation of the popular element, which was represented in every branch, and by the working of a General Council, which had the character and attributes of a real provincial diet. In short, the Danube Vilayet was a model of administration, and the example was soon followed in all parts of the Empire. But in them the success was not so great, since every vilayet did not possess a Midhat Pasha.

A change of Ministry at Constantinople led to a slackening in the activities of Midhat Pasha. Fuad Pasha, Grand Vizier, and promoter of these reforms, fell into disgrace, and Mehmet Roushdy Pasha[1] replaced him, having as his colleagues Kebrisli Mehmet Pasha, as president of the Grand Council, and Namik Pasha, Minister for War. There was only Aali Pasha, who was retained in his post as Minister for Foreign Affairs in the new administration, who was favourable to the person and the work of Midhat Pasha. All the rest of the Ministers, animated by a spirit of opposition, tried to discredit the work of their predecessors and to check the spirit and the *élan* of Midhat Pasha. In spite of this obstruction, the Governor-General continued his work. Wishing to place before him a modest tribute of my admiration, I, under the name of a supposed foreigner, published in the press of Constantinople a long account of a journey through the Vilayet in which was described all that had been accomplished there during Midhat Pasha's administration. The account was so true and striking that it had a great effect, and caused some consternation among the adversaries of Midhat Pasha. When the Governor-General read it, he was at first much perplexed as to who the author could be, declaring that only himself and Fuad Pasha had sufficient knowledge of what had taken place to be able to write the account. His pleasure was great when he learned that I was the author.

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[1] A self-made man. He was first a simple soldier and then corporal in the *Corps de Garde* at Stenja, on the Bosphorus, near the Embassies, where he learnt French. He translated the military code into Turkish. This work brought him into evidence, and he was known as the *Muterdjim* (or translator), a title he always kept.

Odian Effendi, of whom I shall frequently have occasion to speak, was sent on a mission to Constantinople to defend the work of Midhat Pasha and to try to overcome the difficulties created by the jealousy of the Ministers who were rivals of Fuad Pasha. During his absence Midhat Pasha placed me *ad interim* at the head of the department of political affairs, so that I had then three functions—the department of political affairs, my post as chief of a section of the correspondence bureau, and the management and editing of the newspaper *Le Danube*. Midhat Pasha had frequent cause for exasperation at the attitude of the Ministry at Constantinople, and one evening at dinner, when he was particularly angry on account of some measure adopted by the Porte, he was telling us of former difficulties he had had with Kebrisli Pasha, then Grand Vizier, when he was on a mission in Bulgaria. During the conversation, a telegram arrived from Odian Effendi announcing the fall of the Ministry and the accession of Aali Pasha as Grand Vizier, with Fuad Pasha as Minister for Foreign Affairs. He was so delighted with the news, that he summoned the military band, and the rest of the evening was passed as a fête to celebrate the event.

The Cretan insurrection, and the change in the political status of Roumania, had encouraged the leaders of the Bulgarian committees, whose headquarters were at Bucharest, Jassi, Galatz, Braila, and other Roumanian towns. The moral and material support given by the Pan-Slavic Society of Moscow, and the facilities given by Jean Bratiano, Minister of Roumania, were a sort of pledge of success for the Bulgarian revolutionary bands, who were waiting for a propitious opportunity to enter Bulgaria. One morning Midhat Pasha called me to give me the news he had just received from Zistovo. The previous day a Bulgarian band had murdered four little Turkish children in the neighbourhood of that town, and, having almost hacked the bodies to pieces, had stuck branches of bushes in the wounds. Midhat Pasha saw at once the gravity and the motive of this horrible crime, which was to exasperate the Mussulman element and provoke reprisals. Without loss of time he embarked on one of the *stationnaires* for Zistovo, taking with him four companies of infantry, and from there went on to Tirnovo, where the band was surrounded and caught. After the preliminary judicial inquiry as to the culpability of the chief of the band and those of his acolytes who had been taken alive, the Governor-General returned to Rustchuk, where the public trial took place. I visited each of the consuls specially to invite them to be present at the trial, and all were present except the representative of Russia. The verdict given, the execution followed at once, as Midhat Pasha possessed such ample powers that he did not require the Sovereign's sanction for the capital execution.

A little while later another unfortunate incident of the same character took place. A certain Swetko, a Serbian revolutionary, and Voivodo Nicola, a Bulgarian, arrived before Rustchuk on board the Austrian boat *Germania*, *en route* for Serbia, with the intention of crossing " the hedge " (a hedge was the indication of the Turko-Serbian frontier), in order to foment an uprising in Bulgaria. The police officials, who demanded their passports while they were at table, were attacked with revolver shots. The other passengers fled from the boat in a panic, and the two men barricaded themselves in the cabin. M. Martini, the Austrian consul-general, was invited to be present at the arrest of the aggressors. He hesitated, but finally yielded before Midhat Pasha's threat that if revolutionaries were permitted to take passage and shelter on Austrian ships, he might have to refuse permission to Austrian ships to touch at ports in the Empire. Martini and I went on board the vessel together, where the gendarmes, after a furious exchange of revolver shots with the revolutionaries, forced the cabin door, and the two men were seized, one being already dead and the other seriously wounded.

Then came the visit of the Serbian prince. Count Beust, Chancellor of the Austrian Empire, having established the dualism of the Danubian Monarchy, had used all his efforts to obtain from Turkey the retrocession of the fortress of Belgrade to the Prince of Serbia. He hoped by this means to put Serbia under an obligation, while at the same time removing a cause of anxiety for Turkey. The Sublime Porte consented to the arrangement on condition that the Turkish flag should float beside the Serbian national colours, and that the Prince of Serbia should be commander of the place as representative of the Sultan. Prince Michel Obrenovitch came to Rustchuk accompanied by Alerisa Pasha, governor and commander of the garrison of Belgrade, *en route* for Constantinople, where he was to receive the Imperial Firman from the hands of the Sultan himself. A railway accident having taken place on his journey between Rustchuk and Varna, his Highness preferred to return by way of Constanza. I went there to receive him on behalf of the Governor-General, and accompanied him as far as Giurgeovo. During the journey I had frequent opportunities of chatting with the Prince, and found him a man of simple but unattractive character, reserved, dreamy, and melancholy. One fact struck me very much. Every time the Prince wanted to drink, the domestic waiting on him had to taste the beverage before he would touch it. A little while later the man who was afraid of poison in his drink was the victim of the daggers of the conspirators of Topchouderé.

An event of exceptional importance and solemnity for the history of Turkey took place in this summer of 1867. The Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz undertook, on the occasion of the Universal Exhibition of Paris, to make a trip to Europe and visit the capitals of the Western Powers. It was the first time an Ottoman Sultan had left his dominions and confided the destinies of his Empire for a more or less lengthy period to his Grand Vizier. The Sultan, accompanied by his first and second heirs-presumptive, Murad Effendi and Hamid Effendi; his eldest son, Izzeddin Effendi; the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Fuad Pasha, and a splendid suite, embarked at Constantinople on board the *Sultanieh* for Toulon, escorted by a fleet of ironclads of imposing proportions for this period. After visiting Paris, London, Brussels, and Cologne, the Sultan left for Vienna, whence he was to descend the Danube as far as Rustchuk. We left with Midhat Pasha for Buda-Pesth to meet his Majesty, and the Governor-General was also accompanied by notables who represented the four races of the population of the Vilayet—Turkish Mussulmans, Bulgarian Christians, Armenian Christians, and Jews. On arrival at Buda-Pesth, Midhat Pasha received a telegram from the Turkish Ambassador at Vienna instructing him, on behalf of Fuad Pasha, to await the Sultan at the frontier. Midhat Pasha was surprised at receiving this instruction, which he interpreted as disapproval of his having come to Buda-Pesth and an invitation to return to the frontier. He sent me at once to Vienna to have an explanation verbally with Fuad Pasha. On my arrival in the Austrian capital I at once went to Fuad Pasha, who made the matter clear by telling me that the telegram had been sent in ignorance of the fact that Midhat Pasha had already arrived at Buda-Pesth. He told me to telegraph back at once telling him to remain there and await the Sultan. During my stay I had also to settle with Fuad Pasha a still more important and delicate matter. The Sultan had decided to continue his journey from Rustchuk to Constantinople across the Balkans and via Adrianople. As there were no railways in this part of the country, Midhat Pasha considered that the journey would be accompanied by extreme inconvenience and annoyance for his Majesty, and he wanted me to get the Minister and the First Secretary and First Chamberlain of the Sultan to prevail upon the Monarch to change his plans. As Abd-ul-Aziz, however, had absolutely made up his mind upon this itinerary, Fuad Pasha and the two palace functionaries told me it was useless to try to make him change his plans.

At Buda-Pesth, on the evening of his arrival, the Sultan received Midhat Pasha and his suite on board the vessel which had brought him. His Majesty's reception was quite affectionate, and he told Midhat Pasha in our presence that he had no decoration to give him as a recompense to mark his services unless he created a special order for him. The Sultan passed the night on board, and the next morning we took up positions on the landing-stage, facing the magnates and other Hungarian official personages, and there received and acclaimed the Sultan, who passed between us. The Master of Ceremonies had instructed us to salute the Sultan in the military fashion without bowing low before him according to Turkish etiquette. The enthusiasm of the Hungarians was extraordinary, and the Sultan, amid uninterrupted cheering, drove through the town and visited the public buildings. One of these was the *tourbé* (or mausoleum) of Gul Baba, a Mussulman saint who had died and been buried there at the time of the Turkish domination. By a delicate little attention arranged by the people of Buda, the mausoleum was covered with roses, as the name of the saint translated means "Rosy Baba," while His Majesty was presented with a silver vase containing earth from the tomb, on which was engraven this inscription in Turkish, which I had been asked to write, "The city of Buda offers to the Sultan earth from the tomb of Gul Baba." At the Royal Palace at Buda a banquet took place, in which over 800 magnates in wonderfully picturesque uniforms took part. After lunch, Midhat Pasha presented his suite to the Sultan, who received us in private audience, addressing a few cordial words to each of us in turn, and asking us to see him again at Rustchuk. An amusing touch was given to this reception by the fact that as we entered the audience chamber, the aide-de-camp, an Albanian, remembering the recommendation to salute in the military way given earlier in the day, when Europeans were present, whispered to us, "Now you can bow as low as you please"! The same day the Imperial party left again by the Danube on four boats.

The cold and almost disrespectful attitude of the Serbian Prince and authorities, who did not even come to pay their respects to His Majesty, contrasted very forcibly with the warmth of the Hungarian reception, for he was greeted with cordiality and even fervour all along the Danube. Curiously enough, too, just as if nature wished to imitate this sulkiness, as soon as he had arrived before the fortress of

Belgrade, a violent tempest broke loose. The captain of the Imperial boat, as the hour was also late, wished to anchor and spend the night, but the Sultan would not hear of it, and we went on in the night and the storm. On our arrival at Turnuseverin, the first Roumanian stopping-place, a deputation representing the Prince and Government came to pay their respects to the Sultan, while Prince Charles himself went to Rustchuk to meet his Sovereign. At Vidin, where the Sultan went on shore to see the town, I took the *stationnaire* in order to be ahead of the party, and arrived at Rustchuk well in advance, where I imparted to Aali Pasha, the Grand Vizier, who had arrived the evening before with Mehmed Roushdy Pasha, Minister for War, the instructions which had been given me, among other things to tell the Grand Vizier and the local authorities that the Sultan was determined on making the journey across the Balkans.

The population of the country received the Sultan with extraordinary enthusiasm, which was all the more marked as he was returning from a journey that none of his predecessors had ever undertaken. The next day, Prince Charles was received in solemn audience by the Monarch, and after him all the official personages, the consular corps, and representatives of the population of the Vilayet, without distinction of race or religion, who presented their homage of fidelity and devotion. During this stay of the Sultan's at Rustchuk, the Ministers showed such satisfaction with the administrative work that had been accomplished by Midhat Pasha, that they left him free to approach His Majesty and place various suggestions before him without Ministerial intervention, which was a great mark of confidence and approval. The Sultan was treated as if he were a distinguished guest and Midhat Pasha the host. On the day of the Sultan's arrival, the Chief Eunuch of the Sultana mother arrived with a letter for His Majesty from Her Highness expressing her ardent desire to have him back in

Constantinople as quickly as possible; so the plans which the Sultan had made for the rest of his journey were upset, and he left Rustchuk for the capital via Varna, arriving home the following day, whereas the journey he had meditated would have taken about a month.

The Sultan spoke continually of the great pleasure he had had in his journey to Europe. His reception in Paris had been of a most cordial and flattering character, and he had especially been fascinated by the charm of the Empress Eugénie. The only "fly in the ointment" of the Paris visit had been Napoleon III's utterances on the Cretan question. With his visit to England the Monarch was even more pleased. In the first place he was the only one among the Sovereigns who had visited the Paris Exhibition whom the Queen had invited to England. He had been received by Queen Victoria on the royal yacht off Osborne, and as if it were done expressly to please him, knowing his passion for sea-faring, the scene had been a most impressive one, with a tempest blowing and the cannon roaring, as Her Majesty invested him with the Order of the Garter. As there was no ribbon on board, the ribbon of the Prince of Hesse had been used, and later, when it was suggested that this ribbon should be changed, Abd-ul-Aziz refused, declaring that he would never wear any ribbon except that with which Her Majesty with her own hands had decorated him. Another thing that had greatly impressed him had been the might and splendour of the Prussian Army, a review of which was held in his honour on the banks of the Rhine, and the flattering reception given him by King William I. The Sultan learned a good deal during this European visit. On his return he showed a desire to change a great many things in the Empire, and a period of more intense modernity seemed to be promising, such as the undertaking of public works, etc. But, unfortunately, events of which I shall speak later spoiled all these good intentions.

In the spring of 1867 we received Sir Henry Elliot at Rustchuk. Appointed Ambassador for her Britannic Majesty at Constantinople in succession to Lord Lyons, he was *en route* to take up his post at the capital. A cordial interview took place between the Ambassador and Midhat Pasha in the waiting-room of the station, and I was sent by the Pasha to accompany him, in my capacity as political director, as far as Varna. Sir Henry and Lady Elliot were both very charming to me, and our relations continued for many years.

After the Sultan's departure from Rustchuk I was married to my second wife, by whom I have had the happiness to have four daughters and six sons. My wife was born a Mlle. Surmely, the daughter of a Greek gentleman of Adrianople, who had been settled for a long time at Rustchuk. At first the difference of religion constituted an obstacle to my union with the young lady with whom I had fallen in love, and it was strongly opposed by her stepmother. However, it was arranged with my fiancée, and with the connivance of my future father-in-law, that I should abduct her, and this one evening I did. Our houses were close together, and as soon as I had got the young lady installed in my own house, in spite of the resolute opposition of my future mother-in-law, I summoned the witnesses for both sides, one of whom for the fiancée was the Belgian consul, and the marriage contract was drawn up and signed before them. This contract was worded in such a legal form from the Mussulman point of view, and in such formal conditions, that every possibility of a second marriage on the part of the husband was for ever removed. My marriage, in spite of the fuss it caused, brought me many kindly marks of sympathy from my friends. Midhat Pasha was the first to congratulate me. Sir Robert Yell, the British consul, who was always a good friend of mine, at first curiously enough made a difficulty about accepting the situation, because I had entered the house of my father-in-law without permission in order to accomplish the abduction, but finally he accepted the *fait accompli*, and even gave a dinner to celebrate the occasion.

Everything that took place in this part of the country, which was such an important portion of the Empire, tended to enhance the prestige and glory of Midhat Pasha ; every event was a kind of check to Russian politics, which greatly irritated General Ignatieff, then Ambassador at Constantinople. The Russian press, and especially the Pan-Slavist portion of it, carried on a campaign of hostility against the person and the administration of Midhat Pasha. On our side the newspaper *Le Danube*, of which I was editor, defended our cause with much energy and with convincing argument. But in the end the underhand intrigues that were being carried on and a number of acts of a more open character annoyed Midhat Pasha to such an extent that he came to the conclusion that his continued stay in the place was no longer without danger to himself. As a matter of fact, a Serb came to Rustchuk under the pretence of being converted to Islam, and tried to obtain a post in the personal service of the Governor-General, his real intention being to get near to Midhat Pasha and assassinate him. The suspicions we entertained regarding this man were confirmed by a letter that was intercepted, which confessed his criminal intentions and recommended his family to the protection of the Prince of Serbia. Midhat Pasha, not wishing to have the man tried at Rustchuk, sent him to Constantinople with his *dossier*.

A little later Midhat Pasha asked for, and obtained permission to go to the capital on leave. While he was there, the Sublime Porte decided on the formation of the *Conseil d'État*, which had been recommended by M. Bourrée, the French Ambassador, and Midhat Pasha accepted the presidency of this body. After the arrival of the new Governor-General of the Danube, Sabri Pasha, I also went to Constantinople, and as Midhat Pasha wished to have me with him as *maître de réquêtes* of the first class in the *Conseil d'État,* I accepted the post. Going back to Rustchuk to fetch my wife and my mother, I returned to Constantinople in company with Sir Robert Yell, who was leaving on a holiday.

CHAPTER III

1867–1871

Midhat Pasha and my relations with him—Visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales—Governorship of Varna and Tultcha—Visit of the Emperor Francis Joseph—The European Commission of the Danube—Troubles with Roumania—The Franco-Prussian War and its consequences in the East—The Treaty of Paris—German aims and Russian intrigues—Aali Pasha.

Midhat Pasha plunged into his work on the *Conseil d'État* with the same energy and intelligence that he showed in everything he undertook, and in a few months he had succeeded in getting a number of laws of great importance promulgated, such as the law on public instruction, which made primary education gratuitous and obligatory, the law on naturalisation, that on judicial organisation, and others relating to the civil and judicial administration. During the time he was President of this important body he made but two absences, one after a serious illness with anthrax, when he went to Broussa for his convalescence, and the second time to go to the Danube Vilayet and repress the Bulgarian revolt which had broken out for the second time. During these absences Fuad Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs, took his place as interim President of the *Conseil d'État*. As I was the *rapporteur* of several of the proposed laws that I have mentioned, notably that concerning naturalisation, which was the occasion for an exchange of diplomatic Notes with the Powers, especially with France, M. Bourrée, the French Ambassador and promoter of the *Conseil d'État*, showed great kindness towards me and urged Aali Pasha to promote me to the position of *Conseilleur d'État*

At this time Greece, in spite of the capture of the corsair *Arcadie* and the blockade of the Greek ports by the Ottoman fleet under the command of the English Admiral Hobart Pasha, was continuing openly to foment insurrection in Crete. The Sublime Porte decided therefore to break off diplomatic relations with Greece, and handed the representative at Constantinople his passport. A commission was formed at the Ministry of Police to examine the Greek subjects and protégés and make them leave the capital. I was appointed to this commission by Aali Pasha, to supervise the selection of the Greeks whom it was thought necessary to banish. I came frequently into personal contact with Aali Pasha at this time, and he gave me my instructions direct.

Fuad Pasha succumbed to heart disease at Nice, whither he had gone to spend the winter, and his death was the cause of changes in the Ministry. Aali Pasha, Grand Vizier, took the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs, and entrusted the Ministry of the Interior, which had always been attached to the Grand Vizierate, to Shirvani Roushdy Pasha, the presidency of the Council of State falling to Kiamil Pasha. The French Government sent the body of Fuad Pasha back to Constantinople on a warship, and his funeral took place with extraordinary pomp, the whole of the Diplomatic Corps being present, for the first time on such an occasion.

Midhat Pasha was appointed Governor-General of Mesopotamia, his jurisdiction extending over the provinces of Bagdad, Bassorah, and Moussoul, and the command of the Sixth Army Corps. My intimate relations with him pointed to my accompanying him to this new post, and my appointment as secretary general of the Vilayet of Bagdad had been decided on when Aali Pasha, through the new President of the Council, expressed his desire that

I should remain in the capital and take up other political functions.

The Prince and Princess of Wales came to Constantinople in 1869 to return the visit which the Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz had paid to Queen Victoria a year or so before. I was present at the famous ball given at the British Embassy at Pera, which the Sultan graced with his presence. It was only the second time that a Sultan of Turkey had set foot in a foreign Embassy, the first occasion having been when Abd-ul-Medjid also went to the British Embassy to receive the Order of the Garter from Lord Radcliffe Canning in the name of the Queen. More than a thousand persons accepted the invitation of Sir Henry and Lady Elliot to this ball, and the scene was really magnificent when Abd-ul-Aziz made his entry into the ballroom with the Princess of Wales on his arm, the band playing the Imperial Hymn followed by the British National Anthem. The quadrille was opened immediately afterwards, the first figure being formed of the Prince with Lady Elliot, Sir Henry Elliot with the Princess, M. Bourrée with Mme. Ignatieff, and Count Ignatieff with the wife of the British Ambassador at Petrograd, who had come with the Ambassador specially for the visit of their Royal Highnesses. During the quadrille the Sultan stood in front of the seat under a daïs which had been placed for him, with chairs for the Prince and Princess on either side. I remember that the two beauties of this memorable evening were Madame Outré, a Levantine, wife of the first dragoman of the French Embassy, and Mlle. Savalan, a young Armenian lady of rare and classical beauty, with whom the Prince seemed to be very much taken up, as he danced with her nearly all the evening. The Princess, who also struck me by her beauty that evening, danced a good deal with the Spanish *chargé d'affaires*. The Sultan left after supper at midnight, being escorted by the Princess to the head of the staircase and by the Prince and Sir Henry to his carriage. The

Royal couple remained until sunrise, and immediately after their departure the other guests also left.

Aali Pasha wanted me to enter into the diplomatic service, and had destined me for the Athens Legation, when the approaching visit of the Emperor of Austria-Hungary to Constantinople, via the Danube and Varna, necessitated a change in the governorship of this town. The Minister of the Interior summoned me, told me of the Grand Vizier's intentions, and asked me to take the post of Governor of Varna. I accepted at once with pleasure, only stipulating that I should not be given civil rank with the title of Pasha. I was young, and the title of Pasha seemed to me to be cumbersome. My official appointment was published the same week, and a day or two later I went to Varna to enter upon my new duties. M. Bourrée, who was always interested in my welfare, sent for me and inquired if this nomination suited me, and was pleased when I assured him in the affirmative. At Varna I had the good luck to have as chief Akif Pasha, Governor-General of the Danube, who had known me as a student at Janina, and had taken me into his service when he was governor-general of that vilayet. He showed me such kindness all the time I was serving with him, either at Varna or at Tultcha, and was always so ready to accept everything I did or suggested, that at last one day it irritated me, and I said to him, " Excellence, it is very kind of you to praise my work so, but really I should sometimes prefer a little criticism, so that I might really know when I am doing well."

The day of my arrival was marked by a rather disagreeable incident. A stock of gunpowder was being carried from the magazine under the port to another building situated higher up in the fortress. During the transportation sentinels were placed on the route to prevent passers-by from approaching with lighted cigarettes. Sir Robert Yell, the British consul at Rustchuk, and Mr. Mayers, his colleague at Varna, had just left me and were returning to the latter gentleman's house, smoking cigarettes, when a sentinel who had not recognised them, and did not succeed in making them understand what he wished, carried out his orders to the letter and handled them with somewhat soldierly roughness. My two friends immediately came back to me in great indignation with their complaint. I sent for the commander of the garrison, and told him in their presence that the soldier who had laid his hand on the English consuls must be punished. The officer was beginning to justify the act of the sentinel, but, before he had time to explain, I told him the word of two British consuls, and of Sir Robert Yell especially, must not be doubted. Without further ado the commander agreed to punish the soldier, and the two consuls left satisfied. On their return to the Consulate, Sir Robert sent me an official note expressing their satisfaction, and begging that the intended punishment of the soldier should not be carried out.

In view of the Emperor Francis Joseph's visit to Constantinople, before proceeding to Egypt for the inauguration of the Suez Canal, Abd-ul-Kerim, Commander of the Second Army Corps, came to Varna with two divisions to render military honours to His Apostolic Majesty. Most of our time was taken up with preparations for the official reception. Before the Emperor's arrival an Austrian fleet, under the command of Admiral Tegethoff, the hero of Lissa, arrived in Varna Bay. I had many a chat with this distinguished sailor, who made one feel his strength underneath his simple *bonhomie*. The Grand Vizier, Aali Pasha, accompanied by Sirdar Omer Pasha and Baron Prokesh, internuncio of Austria, came to Varna and left at once for Rustchuk to meet the Emperor. Two days later the Emperor arrived at Varna about five o'clock in the evening, and we received him at the station. After the official presentations and a cordial conversation with Admiral Tegethoff, to whom he gave his hand as he stepped from the saloon carriage, the Emperor started on his drive through the town for the landing-stage, having on his left the Grand Vizier and in front of him Omer Pasha. In my capacity of governor of the town, I rode on horseback on the right of the carriage, Muzaffer Bey, the Sultan's aide-de-camp, riding on the left. The Emperor embarked immediately on board the *Sultanieh*, the Sultan's yacht. On board the Grand Vizier presented me to Count Beust, the Chancellor, and to Count Andrassy, President of the Council of Ministers of Hungary. Aali Pasha made me draw up a telegram for the palace at Constantinople announcing the arrival of the Emperor for the next day, and I left the boat. The whole town and the walls of the fortress on the sea front were illuminated, and the infantry and artillery continued firing salutes until the departure of the yacht with the Turkish and Austrian squadrons.

The Emperor's visit being over and the Imperial troops gone, I set myself seriously to the work of carrying out the functions of governor of the most important portion of Bulgaria. The first question to which I attached great importance was the construction of the Port of Varna, the need for which made itself felt from every point of view. The Provincial Diet was about to assemble at Rustchuk, the chief town of the vilayet, and my project for the port was presented in proper form to the Diet by myself as governor and the deputies of the Sanjak, and was accepted. After that I went to the capital to get the project sanctioned. The Government had recognised that the cost of the Rustchuk-Varna Railway would entail an expenditure of £2,000,000, for which sum it had engaged itself by the earlier convention. Interest at 7 per cent. was paid, amounting to a yearly sum of £140,000. The way in which the matter was discussed before the Public Works section of the *Conseil d'État* was so erratic that I took it direct to the Grand Vizier and gave him my views as to the advantages that would accrue to the Government. I pointed out that the construction of the port, apart from the revenue accruing to itself, would bring traffic and consequently revenue to the line which would never come so long as there was no port, simply at the expense of doubling the amount paid in interest in two years, the cost of the port being £300,000. Aali Pasha, realising the importance of the project and appreciating the manner in which I was handling it, asked me to draw up a report. I did this the same evening, going to him in company with the Minister of the Interior, Roushdy Pasha, and thereupon the Grand Vizier accepted my proposal and submitted it direct to the Sultan without passing it through the *Conseil d'État* or the Council of Ministers. Armed with the order from the Sultan entrusting me with this mission, I returned to Varna and got into touch with the maritime construction companies.

M. de Radowitz, who was appointed German consul-general and diplomatic agent at Bucharest, came from Constantinople, where he had presented his credentials and obtained his exequatur, *en route* for his post, but as the snow had interrupted the communications between Varna and Rustchuk, he had to spend four or five days at Varna. We exchanged visits on this occasion, and our personal relations dated from this time.

A few weeks later I happened to be at Shoumla with the Governor-General, Akif Pasha, at the invitation of the Commander of the Second Army Corps, Abd-ul-Kerim Pasha. While I was at headquarters there a telegram from the Grand Vizier reached Akif Pasha announcing my appointment as Governor of the Lower Danube Province and President of the European Commission of the Danube, in place of Suleyman Pasha, deceased, and requesting also that a successor to the post of Varna should be indicated. Akif Pasha, supported by the Marshal, believing that my departure from Varna would mean the failure of the important scheme for the port, urged that I should be retained at Varna, and proposed Colonel Nizami Bey, then consul-general at Budapesth, for the vacant post in the Lower

Danube. But the Grand Vizier insisted upon his first decision, though he agreed that I should not leave Varna until the question of the port had been settled. I handed the reins of government to my successor, Hazam Pasha, and continued negotiations with the different companies which had made tenders. The Strousberg Company (of Berlin), having made the most acceptable tender, I went to Bucharest, accompanied by the chief engineer of the vilayet, and signed the convention with Strousberg's representative. During my stay at Bucharest I had an audience with Prince Charles, and also had occasion to present my respects to the Princess (Carmen Sylva). She was not receiving official visits on account of her interesting condition, but having only recently come to the East, and learning that a Turkish Governor was at Bucharest, she was eager to receive me and satisfy her curiosity. She welcomed me in a charming manner, reclining on a couch. Two years later, when I was again at Bucharest, the Princess again received me very kindly, and presented her little daughter, Princess Marie, who was just beginning to walk. The physiognomy of Prince Charles was not unknown to me. In physique and character he was equally mild and agreeable, and did not give one reason to expect the results which his long reign produced for the good of his beautiful country. The contrast between the pair, both intellectually and physically, was striking. The Princess, of commanding stature, and with an extraordinarily prominent forehead and piercing eyes, made a great impression on the visitor. You thought of some Sappho or Corinne of the Black Forest rather than a Queen of a people as calm and yellow as the Danube which bathes their country.

On my return to Rustchuk, I waited for the thaw of the Danube, and, taking the first boat leaving for the Lower Danube, went to Tultcha, chief town of the Lower Danube (or Dobrudja), where I arrived in March 1870. In April I went to Galatz, the headquarters of the European Commission of the Danube,[1] and took possession of the Presidency of this Commission in my capacity of Turkish delegate, my colleagues being Colonel (later General) John Stokes, for Great Britain; Baron D'Avril, for France; Baron de Radowitz, Germany; Baron Offenberg, Russia; a representative for Austria; and M. Berio for Italy. I was very happy in the carrying out of these functions, since it meant my contributing in a work of civilisation, which, among other benefits, had been made possible by the Crimean War, for the good of international navigation and the development of this fine country; furthermore, I had as colleagues and collaborators the distinguished representatives of the various countries whom I have named, with whom my relations were always of the best. From the first my official and personal relations with Colonel Stokes were most cordial, while with Baron D'Avril I was at once on terms of real camaraderie. After the session the latter and I made a tour together of the district over which I had jurisdiction, and each time we were together at the sittings of the Commission these journeys were repeated.

During the whole time of my stay on the Lower Danube I interested myself very actively in the work which we were carrying out under the skilful direction of Sir Charles Hartley, chief engineer of the Commission, and all the resources of the local government over which I presided were at the disposal of Sir Charles and the technical section. Sir Charles, who was a great authority on works of the kind, was always ready to lend his invaluable help in the different public works which I undertook at Tultcha and other parts. I remember one occasion when I had projected the building of a quay at Tultcha, a piece of work which it had been pointed out to me could only be carried on during the month of September, when the water was low, and therefore must be done very quickly. I sent for engineers and contractors, who came and pointed out the difficulties of the undertaking, and magnified them not a little. Sir Charles Hartley came and viewed the site, made a rough sketch on the spot, said the task was an easy and simple one, and indicated how it should be done; and, as a matter of fact, everything having been got in readiness beforehand, the whole work was completed in the space of twenty-two days.

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[1] As long as Turkey had been in possession of the Danube, she had assured liberty of navigation. But after Russia, by the Treaty of Bucharest of 1812, had acquired the left bank as far as Kilia; by the Treaty of Ackerman (1826), the arm of Sulina; and by the Treaty of Adrianople, the St. George's mouth, the mouths of the river had been neglected and rendered impossible for navigation. Article 15 of the Treaty of Paris declared the navigation of the Danube and its mouths free; and by the terms of Article 16, a commission of seven delegates, one for each State, was appointed to indicate and to carry out the necessary work in order to render the Danube navigable from Issatchacka to the mouths

The Danube Commission had established as a principle that no taxes should be charged for rights of wharfage or anchorage in the portion of the river from Braila to Sulina, at the mouth. In spite of this the Roumanian Government insisted upon collecting taxes, and ordered that they should be paid by the Idarei-Nehrié, or the river service belonging to the government of the vilayet. I happened to be at Rustchuk when the Governor-General learned that the Government of Prince Charles had sequestered at Braila all the *schleeps*, or barges, belonging to this official service against the taxes which had long been demanded, but never paid. As our protests against this high-handed proceeding had no effect, Akif Pasha decided to resort to force to deliver the sequestered barges. The two companies of Albanian gendarmerie which had been organised in the time of Midhat Pasha were embarked on board the *Vidin*, a dispatch boat, and two armoured monitors of the Danube flotilla, and under the command of Rear Admiral Dilaver Pasha, the chief of the river service, left for Braila. I accompanied them as far as Galatz on board the *Midhat Pasha*. Acting on the instructions given him, Dilaver Pasha, accompanied by my secretary for the business of the Commission, went and anchored before Braila and demanded the immediate release of the sequestered *schleeps*, threatening to use force in case of refusal. A panic seized the population at Braila, and troops and artillery were concentrated on the quay. In face, however, of the admiral's insistent threats to fire, the opposition ceased, and the prefect of Braila, with the captain of the port, came on board the boat to inform the admiral that the Prince's Government was ready to give satisfaction by releasing the *schleeps*. We received this news about midnight at Colonel Stokes's, where we had met to wait, not without anxiety, for the issue of the affair.

Sir Robert Yell came to visit me at Tultcha, and a few days after his arrival we went to Sulina. During our stay there the Grand Duchess Michael came from the west to embark on board her yacht for Poti in order to meet the Grand Duke, viceroy of the Caucasus, at Tiflis. By order of the Grand Vizier I went on board the Imperial yacht to present the official compliments and wish her Highness " bon voyage " in the name of the Sultan. When she had gone, we made an excursion to the island (or delta) of Leti, where we lunched under the centenarian trees of the forest of Pevki, which in ancient times gave its name to the island, which was the place of refuge of the King of Tribal when he was beaten and pursued by Alexander the Great before his Asian expedition. We also visited the mouths of the Kilia arm of the Danube and the towns of Vilkoff, Kilia, and Ismail.

Just as we were in the full tide of a special activity both in connection with the organisation of the administration of the country and the execution of works of public utility, in concert with the Commission, and aided by Sir Charles Hartley, there came with the suddenness of a thunderbolt on a serene day of summer (on July 17th, 1870), the news of France's declaration of war against Germany. All our activities stopped as with one accord, and the attention of everybody was centred on this terrible war, which seemed as if it were going to set the East also on fire, especially the Danubian provinces.

The population of the East feared, and indeed were almost convinced, that Prussia had arranged in advance a coalition with Russia, by virtue of which, if Prussia were left a free hand with France, Russia would be permitted to obtain by means of war the ascendancy over Turkey which she had so far sought to get by diplomatic methods. A very lively sympathy with France was manifested by the Turkish people, which was natural enough. It was in a way an expression of gratitude towards France for the unforgettable services she had, together with Great Britain, rendered in the Crimean War in defending the integrity of the Empire and upholding its independence against Russia. All hoped (and openly expressed the wish) for the victory of the French Army; few doubts indeed were felt in the beginning as to its success. The only man in the East who was convinced of the superiority of the Prussian Army and of its ultimate success was Abd-ul-Aziz himself. This was probably partly due to the impressions which, as I said in the last chapter, he brought back with him regarding Napoleon III., and, on the other hand, the strength of the Prussian Army.

The entire population round us, eager to have news as quickly as possible, spent considerable sums in subscriptions to a telegraphic agency, which brought us almost from minute to minute telegrams from the seat of war, which we in turn transmitted to the Commission and to other centres connected by the international telegraph. August 15th was the fête day of the Emperor, and I went to the French consulate to pay an official visit in the name of the Government and to express their hopes to M. Langlais,[1] the French Consul at Tultcha, for a happy issue of the war.

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[1] The son of M. Langlais, *Conseilleur d'État*, who was attached as councillor to the Emperor Maximilian in Mexico.

At the same time, the population made a spontaneous demonstration of sympathy before the consulate. We had hoped the fête would have raised the *morale* of the Imperial troops, and that events would turn out more auspiciously for the French Army; but the news of the disaster of Sedan, which came two weeks later, was a terrible blow that left no further hope of success for the French. The brave M. Langlais felt that he could not remain at Tultcha any longer, and returned to France to serve his country as a simple soldier.

The Ottoman Government had taken all necessary military precautions, and had concentrated troops on the right bank of the Danube. Roumania, although her Prince was a Hohenzollern, assured the Suzerain Court that she would march on the side of Turkey and the Western Powers should Russia attack Turkey. These assurances were repeated to the Emperor of the French, and M. Mavrogheny was sent on a special mission to London to arrive at an understanding with the Cabinet of St. James's. A Roumanian Army of 30,000 men (which for this period was a not inconsiderable body) was ready for all eventualities.

The population of the Danubian provinces learned with no little alarm that on the day of the capitulation of Metz Russia had denounced the treaty of Paris providing for the neutralisation of the Black Sea. This was regarded as a prelude to the nullification of all political engagements relative to the East. An attack from Russia was expected at any moment, and as the Danubian provinces were the most exposed, they expected to receive the first shock. This fear in Turkey of aggression on the part of Russia found an echo in the emotion and indignation caused by the news throughout Great Britain and Austria. The day after our reception of this news, Colonel Stokes, accompanied by Sir Charles Hartley, came from Sulina, where they had been for several days, to meet me at Tultcha and discuss the instructions they had received on the matter from the British Government.

A few days after the denunciation of the Treaty of Paris, I received orders from the Grand Vizier to go to Constantinople and report to him as to conditions in the province, and discuss with the Sublime Porte the measures to be taken for the defence of the country, and for the preservation of those rights which the Commission of the Danube had acquired by this very Treaty of Paris. At Constantinople I found the political atmosphere much more serene than I had anticipated. Prince Gortschakow, the Russian Chancellor, had certainly shown remarkable haste in denouncing the Treaty of Paris without waiting for the end of the war; but Bismarck had been equally quick and prompt to allay the excitement in Great Britain and Austria. He had proposed that Europe, or the signatories of the Treaty of Paris, should meet in conference in order to settle the question raised by Russia. This was a sort of guarantee that peace would not be broken in the East.

Aali Pasha had been the first to comprehend the possible consequences of the defeat of France. After Sedan he had appealed to the British Cabinet and to other European Courts to intervene in favour of France; and he was greatly dissatisfied with the British Ministry, which not only took no notice of the appeal, but with folded arms contemplated the defeat and dismemberment of France. On Russia's denunciation of the Treaty of Paris, Aali Pasha again asked, in a simple and frank manner, whether the British Cabinet had decided to take the measures necessary to oppose Russian aggression. He knew what a British Government, with Gladstone at its head, was capable of doing. When he received a reply emphatically in the negative, he decided to accept the facts as they stood and the fate reserved for Turkey.

The public at Constantinople, as all over the Empire, were fully aware of the misfortunes which the French disaster might bring for the future of Turkey. There were only a few rare exceptions among some of the public functionaries, who, having lost their former influence through the new direction which the administration of the Empire had taken, on the recommendations of France and Great Britain, dared to have contrary opinions. I was among the guests at a dinner at Shirvany Roushdy Pasha, the Minister's, when, after listening to some music which had followed the meal, the conversation turned on the effects of the war. Mahmoud Jellaladin Bey, Under Secretary of State, gave vent to remarks of a very unflattering nature concerning France, and added that he was sorry M. Bourrée had left just when he might have had the pleasure of witnessing his discomfiture at the French defeat. These remarks were aimed indirectly at me, as he knew I had had very friendly relations with the ex-Ambassador of France. I put him in his place with the cutting remark,

" One can hardly blame a man because he is incapable of forming a judgment as to the future, but your delight over the French defeat is unpardonable when it is obvious that the actual effect of this is the disappearance of one of the greatest guarantees for the security of the Empire of which we are all the servants."

All the others present agreed with me.

The object of my journey to Constantinople was to come to an understanding as to the measures that would have to be taken in the Dobrudja in the case of war. I placed a report before Aali Pasha pointing out the importance the country would have in such case, and trying to destroy the prejudice that had always existed regarding this region of the Lower Danube. Before the Crimean War, this country, which was sparsely populated and contained numbers of marshes and lagoons, would have been a very difficult one for the concentration of troops, and even dangerous; but the country having now become more thickly populated and more healthy, it had all the advantages required for the concentration of a large army. Its resources had been developed to such an extent that all the necessary provisions and fodder could be supplied. I went so far, indeed, as to advocate the massing of armed forces in this country, which had such an advanced position, now that Austria, no longer hostile to Turkey, or merely neutral, as she had been in the former wars with Russia, but on the contrary friendly, would, owing to her position with regard to the Carpathians, be a great menace to Russian troops having to pass through the narrow passage between the Carpathians and the Danube to get into Bulgaria. My view, guided by reason and my knowledge of the country, was that all the forces should be concentrated in the Dobrudja and at Vidin, with a view to the occupation of the bridge of Barboch on the Pruth, and of Kalafat in front of Vidin. My report, which was highly appreciated by His Highness, was referred to the Minister for War to be made the subject of a serious study.

Having received such instructions as the political situation required, and having obtained as a safeguard the reinforcement of the flotilla of the Lower Danube by the addition of several naval units, I left Constantinople to return to my post at Tultcha. There we waited, not without anxiety, for the end of the war and the decision of the Conference of London.

I had also profited by my stay in the capital to obtain approval for several of my schemes of administrative reform in the country. The chief of these was the organisation of public instruction in the Dobrudja, where nothing had yet been done, in spite of the promulgation of the law on public education some three years previously. As ever since Midhat Pasha's administration of the Danube Vilayet, the Central Government had left to the local authorities the power of raising pecuniary resources outside of the general revenues of the Treasury, and appropriating them to improvements in the country, the rights of pasturage in the islands of the Danube and other void territory, as well as taxes imposed on the different classes of inns, which were all kept by Jews, gave us funds sufficient—added to the contributions made voluntarily by the peasants—to build and support primary schools in the towns and villages, secondary schools in the chief place of each district, and a grammar school (lycée) at Tultcha, the capital of the Sanjak. Another immediate source of revenue for this purpose was the overplus of the revenues of the Vakouf of Ghazi Ahmed Pasha, devoted by Firman to works of philanthropy at Babadagh, where the first secondary school of the region existed. I was very pleased at getting sanction for all this work. But Aali Pasha, while congratulating me on the results obtained, made a remark in a highly sarcastic manner which greatly annoyed me at the time. "What will become of all these people when they have received their instruction in the condition in which the country is at present ?" he asked. "Will they all become lawyers and idlers as in Greece ?"

This remark, which as a matter of fact was quite just, was a severe blow for me, young as I was and full of enthusiasm for liberty and the progress of the people. But in order not to appear to oppose the opinions of the only man who was, so to say, the incarnation of the Empire, I included in the programme practical and useful instruction for the agricultural class, and this pleased and satisfied the Grand Vizier. Nevertheless, I left him with the feeling that I had as chief a despot and a man of retrograde views. Time and experience have made me appreciate the perspicacity and the broad-minded vision of this great Turkish Statesman, who, in spite of some little failings, really helped the country on the road of gradual progress. Aali Pasha, who was the son of a keeper of one of the gates of the city wall, was brought up among the humblest class of the people, and, familiar from his childhood with their feelings and their mentality, he was better able than any other to realise what the Turkish people had need of. It was really a miracle how this man, by his own unaided efforts, was able to form his mind and acquire instruction (with degrees such as the rarely given bachelor of letters), and still more remarkable how he became a perfect gentleman, and even a *grand seigneur.*

After the three months' sanguinary struggle between the French and German armies, and after an academical discussion among the representatives of the Powers in London, Bismarck succeeded in imposing his onerous conditions of peace on France, and in making dislocated Europe accept Russia's arbitrary act with the mere reservation of this principle, drawn up at the Conference of London: that in future treaties could only be modified with the common consent of all the signatories. It was the first time that Europe had in such an abject form submitted to seeing a treaty summarily declared invalid when its beneficiary was a weak nation.

The double news of the conclusion of peace and the decision of the London Conference was received by us in the East with natural satisfaction. Public confidence being re-established, conditions once again became normal. One of the competitors to world domination being set aside, the European equilibrium had now changed, and the three great Powers, Germany, Great Britain, and Russia, had entered on a new phase of their history. The formation of the German Empire had completely altered the political face of the world, and the Powers found themselves obliged to establish a fresh equilibrium on which their respective interests should be based.

Germany, which had obtained a kind of hegemony in Europe, now had as her aim to consolidate her work and prepare for her future world-policy. Bismarck never lost time in overweening contemplation of his successes or in resting on his laurels. The greater his achievements, the more he was inclined to take precautions not only to safeguard them, but to prepare for future advances and triumphs. He had now two primary preoccupations—first, to assure the isolation of France and prevent her from having a Government capable of inspiring confidence in the other Powers, and thus obtaining for herself allies against Germany; secondly, to consolidate the good relations of Germany with the other Powers. Feeling that Germany had been all too long in leading-strings to Russia, he now sought to reverse the rôles and deprive Russia of a free hand in the Orient.

As to Prince Gortschakow, the Russian Chancellor and rival of Bismarck, filled as he was with pride and satisfaction at having with his own hands wrested from Europe a diplomatic victory the importance of which for his country was incontestable, this statesman considered that the moment had now arrived to strengthen Russian influence at Constantinople by showing amiability towards the Turks. Already M. Stahl, the Russian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople, asked by Aali Pasha when he presented Gortschakow's Note whether it was war that he was bringing, had replied that, on the contrary, he was bringing peace, an enduring peace. General Ignatieff, on his return to Constantinople a few days after this interview, tried his utmost to gain the confidence of the Sublime Porte by persuading Aali Pasha and the other Turkish statesmen that Russia was in reality Turkey's only sincere friend, and that the Western Powers were only using her for their own ends. The Sultan, he said, would never get anything from Germany, whose policy was perfidious and selfish, nor from Austria, whose sole desire was to wrest from her Bosnia and Herzegovina. As to France, she could only be useful to Turkey if, after recovering from her reverse, she ranged herself on the side of Russia.

These fine speeches were in harmony with the general *mot d'ordre* received from St. Petersburg. The Russian diplomats and consuls had been instructed to show themselves amiable and obliging towards the Turkish functionaries and local authorities, and to avoid anything that might annoy or irritate the Porte or its representatives in the different parts of the Empire. As we knew what were the grounds and motives for these protestations of friendship, we were able to estimate them at their real value.

I had the misfortune to have as Russian Consul at Tultcha a certain M. Bellotcherkovitz. This gentleman, who had not been long in his post, from the very day of his arrival showed himself extremely eager to enter into friendly relations with me personally and with the local authorities in general. He even told me of the precise instructions he had received from his Government on this subject, and he never relaxed his efforts to be obliging and amiable towards me, until his attentions became positively embarrassing. He seized upon the flimsiest pretexts to come almost every day and offer me his services. For instance, on one occasion the Bulgarian community organised a fête, and Bellotcherkovitz came to inform me of it and invite me to be present. His desire to be agreeable even led him to draw extensively upon his imagination for opportunities. One day he came to read me a report which he had drawn up for his Embassy at Constantinople in which he told his chief that as he had learned that the Sublime Porte was thinking of transferring me to another post, he begged him to intercede with the object of keeping me at Tultcha. This interference, which I believed at the time arose purely from his inordinate desire to be agreeable to me, was in reality very disagreeable, as I had no desire that my hierarchical superiors should think that I was appealing to foreigners to try and keep me in a post. I reported the matter to the Ministry, and the reply I received showed me that my supposition was not only justified, but that the consul's discovery was a pure invention. This Russian honeymoon, however, did not last long. It stopped, as I shall relate a little later, with the death of Aali Pasha.

CHAPTER IV

1871—1873

"CHINESE" GORDON AND MY FRIENDSHIP WITH HIM—MEASURES OF REFORM IN THE DANUBE PROVINCE—LIBERATING THE CIRCASSIAN SLAVES—ADMINISTRATIVE WORK—THE TREATMENT OF THE JEWS—DEATH OF AALI PASHA—MAHMOUD NEDIM PASHA—HIS CHAOTIC GRAND VIZIERSHIP—THE SULTAN'S CONDUCT—RUSSIAN INTRIGUES—INQUIRY INTO MY ADMINISTRATION—MIDHAT PASHA AS GRAND VIZIER—BISMARCK'S MISSIONS TO THE EAST.

WITH the restoration of political tranquillity in Turkey, we returned to our administrative activities. In the month of April, 1871, took place the first plenary sitting since the war of the Danube Commission. M. de Radowitz, the delegate of the new German Empire, and Baron D'Avril, representing the French Republic, took part for the first time in the deliberations. A little while after this Colonel Stokes was replaced by Colonel Charles Gordon; Baron Offenberg by M. Zinovieff, while Baron Schlechta was appointed Austro-Hungarian delegate. Before leaving his post Colonel Stokes wanted to be present at the manœuvres of the Second Army Corps at Shoumla. Sir Charles Hartley came from Sulina, and we went to Varna together, where we were the guests of the Archbishop Joachim (later the Patriarch of Constantinople). Colonel Stokes joined us on his return from Constantinople, and together we went to Shoumla, where we spent three days and nights under canvas watching the army manœuvres. On our return, we passed by Rustchuk to visit the Governor-General, Omer Fevzy Pasha, formerly the President of the Commission and Stokes's colleague.

The famous Colonel Gordon—or "Chinese Gordon," as he was called, had come to Galatz to replace Stokes with a great reputation gained by the striking manner in which as Generalissimo of the Son of Heaven he terminated the revolt of the Taipings. We expected to find in him the typical military man and martinet. Instead of that, we found Gordon a little man of less than forty years of age, with fresh, rosy skin, fair hair, eyes as bright and pure as a child's, a timid voice, and an almost femininely soft look. His affable manners, his simple and cordial character charmed us all. I have never met a character more loyal or more disinterested or less pretentious. He reminded me of one of those splendid figures of Pagan antiquity, like Cincinnatus, while he was endowed with a Mussulman's depth of faith of the early epoch. At the sittings of the Conference, as also outside it, he showed such modesty and desire to oblige that his predecessor was a little annoyed, but when Stokes ventured to make a remark to him about this before me, Gordon replied very simply that he would be ready to carry water on his back if he found it necessary. His delicacy and kindness of heart made him pay such touching attentions to Baron d'Avril and to M. Langlais, that these two representatives of France, after the defeat, far from finding themselves isolated, or treated with indifference, felt that they were surrounded by an atmosphere of respect and sympathy.

Gordon and I very soon became fast friends. The English delegate to the Commission, being one of the executive committee, had a fixed residence at Galatz; but Gordon, who despised money, luxury, and all other outward signs of human vanity, and was a sincere advocate of the simple life, preferred to stay near me at Tultcha. He took a house there with a large garden, where he installed himself in the most simple manner, his only extravagance being in the number of his domestics, whom he chose among people whose language he did not understand, which he claimed was the only way to avoid their squabbles and backstairs gossip. He asked my permission to make maps of the Dobrudja, which I accorded with great pleasure. He spent days in walking over the country with a perfect battery of implements on his back.

Dr. Johnson once said that the grandson of a man who had seen the Great Wall of China might still be proud of the fact! What vanity, then, may not be felt by the grandson of a man who, instead of having seen the Great Wall, lived for more than two years in absolute intimacy and cordial fellowship with "Chinese" Gordon, one of those men whom the centuries produce with less and less frequency!

I cannot help feeling a certain pride at having lived at a critical period of history in close touch with men whose work, had it not been for an adverse fate, might have preserved the East—and perhaps the world—from such calamities as we have witnessed. But the most flattering and the most comforting of all my recollections is the sincere friendship with which Gordon honoured me; and now, half a century later, the impression caused by his personality is ineffaceable.

During my stay at Tultcha we passed almost every evening together, either at his house or mine. For some time he had with him an American, named Lang, whom he called his "Admiral," because he had been the commander of his river fleet in China. Lang amused us by his mania for making rings with his cigarette smoke, through the middle of which he would poke his cigarette. My uncle was Gordon's "pet child." He always called him "kardash" (Turkish for brother), because they were fellow Freemasons, and took a pleasure in giving him gin. But our greatest delight in those days was in listening to Gordon's accounts of all he had done and experienced in the Crimea, Armenia, and China. His ideas were simple, and he did not seem to have many. His faith was as stable as that of a Mussulman, though his morality was Christian. He believed himself to be at once the toy and the instrument of Providence, and though in some ways he was a child, on the other hand, in many things he was as authoritative and as inflexible as Providence itself. His taste for forlorn hopes and his passion for the unexpected would have made him accept any mission and carry it to fulfilment despite all obstacles. The East and its splendours fascinated him. He was haunted by a desire to put himself at the head of an independent Turkish or British Army and penetrate into the heart of Russia in a war against that country. Everything he possessed he gave to his sister, his friends, and the poor. Indeed, he gave away everything he had, even to his decorations, keeping only the titles for himself. He made me a present of his yellow silk Mandarin's robe which the Son of Heaven gave him when he refused to accept a large sum of money for his services.

Gordon told me he had been greatly shocked by the incapacity of his chiefs in the Crimea, and this judgment did not spare even the commander-in-chief, Lord Raglan, who once made the mistake of confusing his own army with that of the enemy. He gave me a striking picture of the havoc and ruin wrought by the Allied armies in China, who, after putting to the sword the forty eunuchs who guarded the Summer Palace, spent three days and nights in pillaging it, and afterwards set fire to it. The only thing he took himself was the throne, which he presented to the Royal Society of Engineers. It all showed, he used to say, that, after all, our boasted civilisation is but a superficial veneer. There were few things of which Gordon had such a horror as of politics and diplomacy, which he considered to be responsible for a large proportion of the ills of humanity. Strange and infinitely sad, that in the end he, too, was a victim of politics and diplomacy!

An event happened about this time which might have had the result of spoiling our friendship, but which really showed the sincerity of Gordon's character. I was at Rustchuk, and was the guest of Sir Robert Yell, when we received information by telegraph that a young Turk had abducted a girl of British nationality (a Maltese) at Kustendje. I left at once by special boat for Tchernovoda, arrived there in the night, and took a special train for Kustendje. The inquiry which the British Consul in the place and I made together, showed the incident in its proper light—a simple love affair. As the girl and her lover were at Tultcha, I had an exchange of views on the matter by telegraph with Colonel Gordon, who, misunderstanding the apparently sad sight he had witnessed when the girl was confronted with her parents, who had followed her, expressed his indignation to me in strong terms, and demanded that the girl should be immediately handed over to him. It was impossible for me in the circumstances to explain to him the real meaning of the scene he had witnessed, but in order to convince him as to the truth of the matter, I made an exception to the general rule governing affairs of the kind. The girl, who was in love with the young Turk, thinking she could only become united to him by being converted to Islam, went to Tultcha for this purpose. When confronted with her parents, thinking she was going to be returned to them, she started shrieking, and the colonel took this for her fear of being forced by the authorities—a misunderstanding of the situation that had been encouraged by M. Bellotcherkovitz. I therefore told Gordon I was ready to give the girl up to him on condition that on my arrival at Tultcha, he returned her to the authorities. My orders to this effect having been carried out, Gordon very soon grasped the truth of the situation, but he was obliged all the same to take the girl to his house. The next day I arrived at Tultcha with the Consul from Kustendje, and Gordon came to see me immediately with his opinion entirely changed. He excused himself, and said he was ready to settle the matter in the regular way. "It is the first time I have meddled with political affairs," he said, "and it will be the last."

As a marriage between a Mussulman and a Christian is perfectly legal in the form of a civil marriage, a contract was drawn up at Gordon's house and was signed by the two contracting parties, countersigned by the Kadi and myself as witnesses for the husband, and by Colonel Gordon and the Consul, Colonel Sankey, for the wife. Gordon placed part of his house at the disposal of the couple for two days, and was very generous to them in the matter of presents. By such and other means he likewise did all he could to pacify the girl's parents. This incident, and the way in which it was settled, was reported by Gordon to the Embassy, who thanked me through the Sublime Porte. Though others tried to use it as a means of creating a misunderstanding between us, the incident, in reality, helped us to know each other better.

A curious event of a different order occurred about this time. The Governor-General, Akif Pasha, invited me with the other governors of the Sanjak which formed the vilayet, to the festivities on the occasion of the circumcision of his two sons. While we were on this visit, the Governor of Vidin, Aziz Pasha, got himself invited by the Bulgarian community to congratulate them on the occasion of the promulgation of the Imperial firman on the Bulgarian Exarchate. In the speech he made on this occasion, Aziz Pasha, talking of his own origin (he was a Bosnian), boasted of being descended from Michel Kobilovitch, the assassin of Sultan Murad I. after the victory of Kossovo. This extraordinary speech was reported in Constantinople, and Aali Pasha, the Grand Vizier, asked by telegraph for the immediate return of Aziz to the capital. He was divested of his office, and never got another one so long as Aali Pasha lived.

All the various governmental functions again started operations after the war, and numerous projects in the administrative and economical domains were taken up with a view to their realisation. The chief of these projects were:—

(1) The liberation of the Circassian slaves;

(2) The installation on the shore opposite Braila of the Jews persecuted in Roumania; and

(3) The establishment in different regions of the Dobrudja of German colonists.

The population of the Sanjak of Tultcha consists for the most part of immigrants of different races, either Mussulman or Christian, who came originally from the Russian countries that had belonged in past times to Turkey. Among them were more than 20,000 Circassians, of whom 5,000 were considered to be slaves. The departure of Midhat Pasha from the vilayet had already made itself felt by a slackening in the administration, which, as I have said, was in his time a model administration. I had noticed the change from my early days at Varna, but at Tultcha I came face to face with facts that revolted me and that I had to set to work to remedy at all costs. In the first place, there was this question of the slavery of the Circassians. Then there was the persistent robbery of cattle, the most precious possession of the rural population of Turkey, by these same Circassians.

The Circassians are a race of extraordinary vivacity and energy. Wherever they settle they make themselves felt and exercise a marked influence, which, owing to their lack of education, is often prejudicial to the other inhabitants. The Circassian thinks that when he is in trouble others owe it to him to help him out of it, whether they want to or not. When such a need presents itself, the Circassian who is in search of help, either alone or with friends, goes to another of his race in easy circumstances and announces that he has come as his guest to enjoy his generosity and help. Without any prevarication, negotiations are opened up with a view to fixing the number of animals to be handed over or the sum to be paid, and the visitors depart with the animals, arms, or money agreed upon. When, however, the person owning the coveted property is not a Circassian and does not understand these simple and accommodating habits, the needy one has to get what he wants by means of robbery. Robberies of this nature had taken place so extensively in the parts of the country where the Circassians were established, that the indigenous population were in danger of not being able to continue the cultivation of their lands. To combat this evil, it was necessary to have recourse to measures that took account of their characters and would be speedily efficacious. I deemed it best to appeal to the Circassians through their amour-propre, which was stronger with them than with the Bulgarians or the Turks of these regions.

I therefore invited all the chiefs and the elders of all the villages to come and meet me at Babadagh, the centre of the country where they were settled. I then told them that if the Sultan and Caliph had received them in his Empire, and the old subjects of his Majesty had taken them to their hearts as brothers, giving them land and all that was necessary for their settlement, they did not expect the recipients of such kindnesses to act as they had been doing. I left it to themselves to judge the gravity of their acts and to enter into an undertaking to stop their evil deeds in the space of twenty days. If they did not do so, they would be expelled from the country which had given them such hospitality. This declaration impressed the Circassians, and they drew up and signed on the spot a promise to desist from their evil acts, which we soon found that they faithfully kept. The robberies ceased as if by enchantment, and the least disposition to stealing shown by individuals was forestalled by the chiefs of the villages, who informed the local authorities of the slightest evil-doing.

With regard to the other evil—slavery—which we had to remedy, the Circassians had for long been accustomed to possess slave families, and they demanded the maintenance of this right after their immigration into the Turkish Empire. The Sublime Porte recognised the right, but prohibited the sale of slaves, a restriction which in practice it was difficult to control, for two reasons—first, because, the slaves being sold privately, the transaction could not be detected; and secondly, since the prohibition of the exportation of this human merchandise from the Caucasus, the Palace sent men to the country where the Circassians were settled to choose young girls, who travelled to Constantinople in the ordinary way.

As soon as I arrived at Tultcha I took it upon myself to improve the lot of these people gradually, and worked for their eventual complete liberation. But the matter was not so easy, for the reasons which I have named, and also on account of the relations which the Circassian chiefs had in the Palace. On the other hand, the protection which the local authorities extended to the slaves, followed by the prohibition to sell and transport these girls to Constantinople, encouraged the slaves in their desire for liberation, and made them more and more disobedient to their masters.

In order to arrive at a working basis, I called together the deputy governors, and instructed them to draw up lists of the exact number of slaves in their respective districts. This operation was carried on in order everywhere except at Babadagh, the district where there were most Circassians. Here the deputy governor, instead of asking the masters for the lists of their slaves, called masters and slaves together, and, addressing the latter in a very tactless manner, told them they were slaves, and must implicitly obey the orders of their masters. This so angered the slaves that they attacked the masters, something like a riot ensued, and in a very short while there were two camps in the place, the slaves having barricaded themselves in a disused barracks, while the masters fortified themselves in another building. Summoned to the scene by telegraph, I succeeded, after some difficulty, in inducing the slaves to go home and be patient until we had accomplished our task of liberating them.

We finally succeeded in freeing all the slave families, and in indemnifying their masters. The price of adult males was fixed at 2,000 piastres (£20 each); that of females at 1,500 piastres (£15); and that of minors at 500 piastres (£5). The money thus spent, as well as the sums disbursed in the settlement of the liberated people, in the purchase of cattle, agricultural implements, etc., was advanced by the agricultural banks, to which the liberated slaves became indebted in the same way as other cultivators and agricultural proprietors.

The Jews in Roumania were condemned to the same fate as those in Russia. They had not the right to settle as proprietors or cultivators of the soil, or even to establish themselves in rural communes, and were not allowed to exercise the trades they would have chosen; but, compelled to live by ignoble and dishonourable means, they were subjected to the worst persecution. Since 1866 these persecutions had been so frequent and so cruel that the conscience of the civilised world was at last aroused. We, who were the nearest witnesses of these persecutions, could not be indifferent to the sufferings of these unfortunate creatures; it was a duty of our common humanity to help them.

It is an infamy and a crime to insult and to persecute an entire population merely because of their birth and race. The very reasons put forward by the Russian and Roumanian Governments to justify their policy sufficed to establish their responsibility. The Jew in Roumania or Russia is degraded, not by his race nor his blood nor his creed, but by the very laws of the country he lives in. It is the restriction put upon his acts that forces him to live as he lives. His surroundings form his life and create for him his social and moral level. Compare the Jew of these countries where he is persecuted with those in Great Britain, America, and France, and even in Turkey, and one has the proof of what I say.

It was such considerations as these, the force of which was enhanced by the respect that all Mussulmans owe to the race from which sprang the truth of all religions and all the intelligence possessed by humanity through revelation, which urged us to try and remedy the misfortunes of the Jewish population of Roumania. Just opposite the town of Braila, on the right bank of the Danube, where the Machin arm joins the river, is a locality known as Pot-Bachi, which was chosen as the site of a new town to be placed at the disposal of the persecuted Jews of Roumania. The plan of the town was drawn up, arrangements were made with the Israelite families who were to settle there, and the whole submitted to the Imperial sanction.

As to the German colonists, numbering some 100,000, who wished to leave Russia and establish themselves on the Lower Danube, because Russia, which had first exempted them from military service, had lately changed her disposition with regard to them, their request, supported by their representatives, especially by M. de Radowitz, was examined and approved. More than one reason existed in favour of this project. First of all, the country, which had a superficial area of 12,500 square miles, was peopled by only 360,000 inhabitants, and this vast and fertile region needed hands to cultivate it. Six German villages had long existed in the country, and the inhabitants of these villages, who were strong and honest and good cultivators of the soil, were rightly regarded as model immigrants and excellent law-abiding citizens. To increase the number of such villages would mean doubling and trebling the wealth of the country and the revenues of the State. This request, therefore, was also submitted to the Sublime Porte.

Aali Pasha, who several years before had allowed German colonists to establish themselves on Mount Carmel, in Palestine, was in favour of these two schemes which I have just indicated, but unfortunately his long illness and his death postponed the obtaining of the Imperial sanction. Later on, the great deference shown towards Russia by Server Pasha, who succeeded Aali Pasha as Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the muddle-headed policy of Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, Grand Vizier, caused both these plans to be dropped.

During my career I have twice had occasion to consider such questions of German colonisation. If on this first occasion I was favourable, matters were very different the second time. That was when Abd-ul-Hamid granted the concession for the prolongation of the Anatolian Railway to Konia and Cæsarea, on which occasion he also at first granted rights to German colonists to settle along the line. The reader will see later on the opposition I made to this German *mainmise* when I deal with the Asia Minor Railways.

The East, which seems to so many people to be utterly recalcitrant to order and good government, is in my opinion the easiest part of the world to bring into good ways if one is only just and patient. One little instance is sufficient to illustrate my meaning. One afternoon I was out riding in the neighbourhood of Tultcha, when on the heights above the town I saw two fellows fighting. I went up and arrested them. But the question was how to get them to the police-station in the town, as I had only one servant with me. After taking their names, I made them lock arms, and bade them go in this way and give themselves up to the police, and wait for me, warning them that if they did not obey, they would both be punished severely. On my return to the town I found them in the hands of the police authorities awaiting their punishment.

Kustendje (now Constanza), which was the chief town of the most important district dependant on Tultcha, being the chief seaport of the Dobrudja and head of the railway connecting the Black Sea with the Danube, was the object of special attention from the Government of which I was the head. Two important questions particularly engaged my attention. The first was that of the port. The English company which had constructed the small railway had also made the port and the quay used by seafaring vessels. They allowed the merchants of the town to load and unload their goods without paying dues, and to use the company's funnels for cereals on payment of 20 para (one penny) per kilé (about 25 kilogrammes). Later, however, the manager of the company arranged with his Highness Mustapha Fazil Pasha (brother of Ismail Pasha, Khedive of Egypt) to buy the port from the Turkish Government for £150,000. On this taking place the liberty so far enjoyed by the merchants of the town was stopped, and they had to pay the tax, which was more than the tax paid by the whole district to the Treasury. While I was at Constantinople I made a thorough study of this question, and presented a detailed report to the Grand Vizier, who saw at once what an unjust imposition the population was subjected to. I was instructed to arrange the matter on the spot, and I took with me a delegate of the Ministry of Public Works to carry out the decisions of the Sublime Porte. After overcoming a whole mass of difficulties created by the directors of the railway and the port of Kustendje, the matter was arranged to the satisfaction of the merchants.

The second question was the water supply. Kustendje—the ancient Tomos, place of exile of the poet Ovid—must have suffered destruction several times, for the excavations made for the railway works near the port brought to light two levels of ancient ruins placed one on top of the other. The new town forms the third level. The Romans made subterranean conduits of very solid construction which brought the water from the sources of Lake Sude-Gheul (the "Milky Lake," so called from the purity of the water), some miles north-west of the town. From the source we were able to convey the water to the spot where the ancient subterranean conduits remained intact, and thence by means of a steam engine to raise it to the highest part of the town, where our central reservoir was fixed. In this way this important town had the good fortune of possessing an excellent and abundant water supply. My successor in the governorship, through some feeling of jealousy, as I can only suppose, destroyed this useful work and utilised the pumping machine and the pipes for another purpose. The consequence is that the town's water supply is still of a very primitive character; and I am astonished that the Roumanians, since they have been masters at Constanza, have not been struck by these works and put so useful a public enterprise in order again.

For the second time we had a regrettable incident with Roumania. A small Turkish barque, laden with tobacco, in the Danube, was pursued by a brigade of Roumanian soldiers on the pretence that the merchandise was contraband. The boat and the tobacco were seized at Pot-Bachi, opposite Braila, where it had taken refuge, and was brought to Braila. As this act constituted a violation of territory, we were compelled to demand the restitution of the confiscated boat and merchandise, with reparation. On the refusal of the authorities at Braila, the Government boat was sent to that town to repeat the demand with threats. On this the goods were restored, a deputation from the Ministry went to Rustchuk to express the excuses of the Prince's Government, and these excuses were repeated to me by a telegram from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I was at Kustendje with my family in the autumn of 1871 for the sea-bathing, when I received orders from the Sublime Porte to go and establish the delimitation and hand over to the heirs the immense landed property which Mirza

Said Pasha, ex-Governor General of Silistria, had owned in the district of Medjidie. Just before my departure from Mahmoud Kouissou, the chief village on the estate, I received the sad news of the death (on September 6th) of Aali Pasha, and the astonishing announcement of the accession to the Grand Vizierate in succession to him of Mahmoud Nedim Pasha. The same evening, while I was at Machin *en route* for Tultcha, I received the news of the birth of my first son, Mahmoud.

The death of Aali Pasha, at the comparatively early age of fifty-six, at the very moment when Germany had gained the great victory that had upset the whole of Europe, and when Turkey was more than ever in need of a strong man, was little short of a calamity. He was practically the last of the astute statesmen who, since Turkey had by the Treaty of London of 1841 been admitted to the Concert of Europe, had built up the forces of the country and guided her destinies. Had Aali Pasha lived, it is more than likely that many of the events which ensued, and which made the Eastern question more and more acute as time went on, would have taken on a very different complexion.

The appointment as Grand Vizier of Mahmoud Nedim Pasha astonished every one. He had been Minister of Marine under the Grand Vizierate of Aali Pasha, and then—and especially during that Minister's illness—had sought to gain favour with his Imperial master in two ways—first, by helping the Sultan in his ambition to improve the great fleet which Turkey possessed at that time, and which, thanks to his Majesty, really was an imposing one; and secondly, by satisfying the Sultan's love of money. As the administration of the service of coasting vessels was under the direction of the Ministry of Marine, and the revenue was apportioned to the Civil List, Mahmoud Nedim, in spite of a deficit each month, procured a large sum of money monthly by borrowing at an exorbitant rate of interest from the bankers at Galata, and paid this over to Abd-ul-Aziz as his Majesty's share of the income due to him!

The Sultan during the time of Aali Pasha and Fuad Pasha had been almost a Constitutional monarch, reigning but not governing. Aali Pasha had exercised such an influence over him, that he did nothing without consulting this Minister and gaining his approval. But the death of Aali Pasha relieved him of this necessity of having his acts submitted to the approval of his Ministers, and from that day he felt himself to be a real and absolute Oriental sovereign. Unfortunately, fate willed it that just at that juncture a man like Mahmoud Nedim Pasha appeared on the scene and permitted the Monarch to realise his desire for arbitrary action.

Mahmoud Nedim Pasha's first acts as Grand Vizier were to get rid of all the Ministers and Governors who had collaborated with Aali Pasha and of other functionaries who had been devoted to the service of the State. He degraded or exiled them without any excuse or any kind of inquiry.

He appointed and reappointed new men to the various posts in the most erratic and incoherent manner. A man who had been a Governor-General under Aali Pasha would, for no apparent reason, be nominated a simple governor. Again, men were appointed to certain governorships, but before they had reached their posts were transferred elsewhere. Hussein Avny Pasha, the Minister of War, was divested of his functions and sent to Sparta (his native town) in exile. Shirvani Mehmed Roushdy Pasha, Minister of the Interior, was sent to Massia in the same way. Husny Pasha, the Minister of Police, was degraded and exiled to Cyprus. Midhat Pasha, who was still at Bagdad as Governor of Mesopotamia, was relieved of his post with the prospect of being banished somewhere in the interior of Asia.

The confusion and chaos caused by such methods are more easily imagined than described. Within ten months Mahmoud Nedim Pasha succeeded in destroying all the good work that former Ministers had taken over thirty years to accomplish. He kept himself in office by flattering the Sultan and giving full vent to his whims and fancies. Abd-ul-Aziz, as I have said, freed from the restraint that had been exercised over him by Aali Pasha and his council, made up his mind to enjoy absolute power and to govern the country according to his caprices. Ignatieff, the Russian Ambassador, delighted at the deplorable condition into which the Empire was drifting, did his utmost to gain the Sultan's goodwill, and succeeded in becoming almost omnipotent at the palace. He frequently told the Sultan that there were but two voices in the world that counted —his own and the Tsar's—and that when they two were in agreement, the whole world had but to bow and humiliate itself. The Sultan, willing to believe that all other foreign influences on which his Ministers had based their acts had been pernicious, succumbed to these wheedling methods. Mahmoud Nedim exploited the situation for his own ends.

My old friend Bellotcherkovitz, who had formerly been so charming to me, now, after the death of Aali Pasha, and while the new Grand Vizier was carrying on his systematic persecution of all the Ministers and functionaries who had served under Aali Pasha, also changed his feelings and attitude towards me.

The country under the sway of the Ottoman throne where Russian intrigue was most vigorous was Bulgaria, and especially the portion north of the Balkans forming the Danube Vilayet. For this reason the Sublime Porte had given special attention to this part of the Empire when Midhat Pasha was the Vali, or Governor, in order to have there a perfect organisation and a just administration calculated to paralyse any destructive plans of Russian diplomacy. It was Midhat Pasha, too, who repressed the first revolutionary movements in Bulgaria. After him the work was continued by functionaries trained in his school, myself among the number. Thanks to Russian pressure, and owing to the policy—or rather lack of policy—of Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, all these officials were driven from office one after another. I was the only one who remained.

This fact exasperated Bellotcherkovitz and his chief Ignatieff. But the credit that I enjoyed with the British diplomatic representatives, and the consular corps generally, and the confidence reposed in me by the population of the country, happily preserved me from the arbitrary treatment that had been meted out to my colleagues.

However, difficulties connected with the settlement of the question of the Bulgarian Church, which had been recently established in the country, having become acute (and this had been the greatest political success of General Ignatieff), it was essential, in the eyes of the Russian representatives, that I should be removed at all costs. To this end Bellotcherkovitz thought fit to start a campaign of calumny against me, and in order to carry it on he bought at Constantinople a French reactionary newspaper, the *Courrier d'Orient*. Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, who wanted to be agreeable to the Russian Embassy, but was anxious at the same time not to irritate public opinion, which was favourable to me, decided to have an inquiry made on the spot into the complaints that had been made against me and my administration. Nafiz Bey, former Secretary-General of the Government of the Danube Vilayet, was sent as commissary to make this inquiry. Sir Henry Elliot, who had been kept *au courant* of what was going on by the British Consuls at Rustchuk and Varna, and by Colonel Gordon, when he heard of the decision of the Sublime Porte, went to Mahmoud Pasha, and expressed a strong hope that I was not going to be made another victim of Russian intrigue. On the Grand Vizier protesting that the inquiry would be carried out with the strictest impartiality, the Ambassador gave Nafiz Bey a letter for Colonel Gordon. Nafiz Bey, on his arrival at Tultcha, came to me and told me his instructions were to go to Colonel Gordon immediately and hand him the letter of Sir Henry Elliot. He told me the British Ambassador had declared that he would not consider the inquiry as being conducted impartially unless Gordon certified to it.

All the elements and evidence necessary for the inquiry were furnished to Nafiz Bey, and in order to leave him more liberty to make his inquiry I went to Rustchuk. On my return, when the inquiry was over, Nafiz Bey, in the course of a chat one day, was telling me of the vast power enjoyed by the Grand Vizier, and of the absolute confidence reposed in him by the Sultan, which made him practically irremovable, when at the very moment that he spoke a telegram was handed to me announcing the fall from power of the "all-powerful" Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, and the appointment as Grand Vizier of Midhat Pasha.

Nafiz Bey did not have very much trouble in establishing the truth with regard to the accusations made against me, because, apart from some charges of a character not only ridiculous, but utterly unimportant, the two chief accusations were—(1) that a Christian minor had been forced by me to become a convert to Islam; (2) that a Russian of Tultcha, put into prison for a crime, had been got out of the way by me after having been claimed by the Russian Consul.

This minor was the son of a member of the Orthodox faith, who, after having changed his religion a number of times, finally became a Mussulman. The father, who was of very doubtful morality, claimed the right to make his son also embrace the new religion he had adopted. After consultation with the Christian Archbishop of Tultcha, the boy was put into the Convent of Kokosh until he should attain his majority. The father, furious at this decision, went to Constantinople to lodge a complaint against me on the ground that I had prevented the boy from following his father in his religion in spite of his conviction. Mahmoud Pasha telegraphed demanding that the boy should be sent immediately to Constantinople. This was done, and, after an inquiry, the same measure as I had adopted was followed, and he was handed over to the Patriarch.

The so-called Russian was an inhabitant of the town of Tultcha, but of Russian origin, as indeed were many other inhabitants whose families had been settled in the Lower Danube for centuries. He had been judged and condemned by a local court for robbery. The Russian Consulate had protested against the trial on the ground that a dragoman of the consulate had not been present, but it was easily shown that the man was a Turkish subject and not a Russian. After he had served his term he was released. Then Bellotcherkovitz, paying him a sum of money, told him to take refuge in Russia, and, believing the man had followed his advice, came to me and asked me what had become of him. I said that as he had purged his offence and was now free again, his whereabouts did not concern me. In face of M. Bellotcherkovitz's attitude, I asked him if he thought I had done away with the man, and his reply was that since I could not produce him, he was free to believe what he liked. This made me so indignant, that I showed the consul the door. Inquiries proved that the man had not gone to Russia, but was in a neighbouring village harvesting, and I sent for him. When he appeared, I called the other consuls together, and asked them to certify his presence, not as representatives of their countries, since it was not a matter that concerned their countries, but as a friendly act to myself; and this they accordingly did.

A few weeks after the inquiry I left for Constantinople to see my old patron, Midhat Pasha. Nafiz Bey also left. During our journey, as we were leaving Burgas by boat, a violent tempest broke, and the boat took shelter at Kachiveloskala, where we spent twenty-four hours. Nafiz

Bey, who was very much afraid of the sea, continued his journey to Constantinople by way of Adrianople. M. Zarifi, the banker, and his sister, Madame Negreponte, were also on board. As the little daughter of Mme. Negreponte suffered terribly from seasickness, this lady asked me to disembark with her and to accompany them to their place at Burgas until the arrival of another boat. After three days' delay we arrived at the capital.

The next day I paid my official visits. On the occasion of my first visit to the Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Karatheodory Alexander Pasha, an amusing incident occurred. The second dragoman of the Russian Embassy was calling at the same time on Karatheodory Pasha, and was speaking of me in the most violent terms, asking how the inquiry into my conduct was proceeding, and saying that the Russian Embassy was impatient to learn the result. My person was unknown to the dragoman, and Karatheodory, without moving a muscle, calmly remarked, as he turned towards me, " By the way, this gentleman, if I am not mistaken, comes from Tultcha, and might be able to enlighten us on this matter." Keeping up the joke with a great effort, I very calmly gave all the information I could which was likely to change the opinion the dragoman had formed about myself, and he left saying he would inform his Embassy of the new facts he had gleaned. We greatly enjoyed this joke, but the dragoman was extremely embarrassed when he met me later, having learned who I was.

Colonel Gordon had travelled over the Russo-Turkish frontier in Asia Minor after the Crimean War as a member of the Commission for the delimitation, and had remained highly enthusiastic in his admiration for the Kurdish cavaliers. As I was leaving Tultcha, he gave me a special message for the Sultan to the effect that, " If he wanted to see for himself the splendours of the Sultan of Turkey, he should go to the country of the Kurds and put himself at the head of these cavaliers, of whom there exist no equals in the world." During my stay at the capital, Gordon and I corresponded frequently, and after a little while he also came on a visit and was the guest of Sir Henry Elliot and my neighbour as well as Radowitz's. One evening at dinner at the British Embassy at Therapia, Nubar Pasha had a long conversation with Gordon, and proposed to him that he should go to the Sudan as successor to Sir Samuel Baker. The Colonel asked my opinion, and, as I knew his feelings of friendship, so often shown, for Turkey, and realised that the projects engendered by the Khedive's ambition were incompatible with his feelings, I had no hesitation in advising him not to accept. He did not go at that time, but when some two years later he accepted this same offer, he came to see me at Constantinople on his way to Egypt, and told me his reasons, which I could not but recognise now were valid.

The disorder caused by the stupid and blundering administration of Mahmoud Nedim Pasha had suspended all public affairs, and, apart from General Ignatieff, who had greatly profited by the situation, all the Embassies had been much disconcerted. The nomination of Midhat Pasha, and especially the circumstances in which his appointment took place, now restored confidence both at home and abroad. Midhat Pasha had arrived at Constantinople in spite of the Grand Vizier, who was furious at his appearance, as he had been persistently pestering the Sultan to exile him. Unable to sleep from the knowledge that Midhat Pasha was still in the capital, he had him nominated Governor-General of Adrianople, and ordered him to leave immediately for his post. Midhat Pasha went to present his respects and thanks to the Sultan, in accordance with the custom, and to take leave. In order that Midhat Pasha should not be left alone with the Sultan, Mahmoud Nedim Pasha had arranged that the audience should take place at the same time that two other governors-elect—

two marshals, who had been appointed to Erzeroum and Crete—were also received by the Sultan. He had counted upon them to give to the conversation a commonplace turn, and hoped that they would support him in anything that was said. The Sultan asked Midhat Pasha to give him his views on the state of affairs, in response to which the statesman drew a most pessimistic, but faithful picture of the condition of the Empire, which he described as drifting into chaos through the incompetence of Mahmoud Nedim. Abd-ul-Aziz, deeply impressed, turned to the two marshals, who, instead of controverting Midhat Pasha's views, fully confirmed them, with their eyes full of tears, and added, indeed, that their colleague had not made the picture black enough. The Sultan told Midhat Pasha to return home and await further instructions. The same evening the first Chamberlain of the Palace arrived to announce to him his appointment as Grand Vizier.

Midhat Pasha at once set about restoring order, and one of his first acts was to recall to their posts all the old Ministers of Aali Pasha who had been degraded or exiled.

It was about this time that I began to learn a great deal about Bismarck's intentions with regard to Turkey. No historical utterance has been more often quoted than the celebrated remark of Bismarck that the "Eastern question was not worth the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier." But, although so often quoted, no historical utterance has ever been the cause of so much ambiguous comment, or has been more constantly misunderstood and misinterpreted. It has even been used to corroborate the views of those who would contrast the alleged prudent policy of Bismarck in cautiously confining his ambitions to the consolidation of a united Germany in Europe with the presumptuous "world" policy of his successors under William II., who, heedless of the safe Bismarckian methods, by their violent demonstrations caused the Powers to take alarm and unite against the Pan-Germanist danger.

In these pages I endeavour to show the workings of the Bismarckian policy with regard to the East. The reader will see the beginnings initiated by Bismarck himself of that logical movement of pan-Germanist expansion, the consequences of which became patent to all many years later after the great Statesman's disappearance from the political scene, and which have become still more evident in their glaring nakedness in the horrors of the present war.[1]

It was an essential part of the Bismarckian policy to extend German influence in the East. His theory of a balance of power in which the slightest gesture from Berlin would set the scales in motion involved the obligation never to forget Constantinople and Asia Minor. The reader will see how, though it was not always apparent, the East was never long absent from his political calculations.

At this time Bismarck had long been desirous of entering on a discreet policy of amiable influence with the Sultan's Government, and to that end had sent Radowitz to Constantinople as Chargé d'Affaires, with instructions to prepare the ground for an amicable *entente*, the chief object being to wean Turkey from Russian influences. Radowitz had recently come from Bucharest, where he was consul-general. Young, active, and intelligent, he possessed a further advantage in having a Russian wife, who served for him as a sort of *passe-partout*. Radowitz enjoyed the absolute confidence of his chief, and apart from his personal qualities, his own amour-propre was at stake in this enterprise, as at Bucharest he had been the object of all sorts of anti-German manifestations on the part of the Roumanian population, manifestations which Bismarck described as "infamous." During the war the agency had even been stoned by the people to show their sympathy with France. Radowitz had also fought a bitter fight on the Strousberg railway question in Roumania, to which Bismarck attached great importance. In order to give a fillip to the national amour-propre, he had referred this matter to the Sublime Porte to give its decision as Suzerain Court and supreme authority.

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[1] Written in 1918.—Ed.

Bismarck had had great confidence in the judgment and diplomatic capacity of Aali Pasha, and had anticipated encountering no difficulty in establishing close relations with Turkey during his Grand Vizierate. But his hopes and activities were necessarily suspended on the death of Aali Pasha and during the term of office of Mahmoud Nedim. They were now resumed on the accession to power of Midhat Pasha.

Radowitz was aware that I enjoyed the complete confidence of the new Grand Vizier. It was therefore natural that in conversations when we found ourselves together at Constantinople and neighbourhood, he should tell me confidentially of his mission and of his chief's desire to establish particularly friendly relations with Turkey. He gave me in detail Bismarck's reasons, which seemed to me rather more interesting than reassuring. Bismarck was desirous that Turkish statesmen should not remain under the impression that Turkey had been left at the mercy of Russia after the defeat of France. On the contrary, he was very eager to strengthen the international position of the Ottoman Empire, and make use of it to rid himself of the moral yoke of Russia.

These advances on the part of Germany, couched in amiable form and presented in the most discreet manner, which Radowitz asked me to commend to Midhat Pasha, could not but be accepted by us with a certain satisfaction. Nevertheless, not having learned as yet to understand and appreciate the tendencies of this new factor, and more or less sceptical of their value, we preferred to continue the traditional policy with Great Britain and the Liberal Powers upon whom we counted for the maintenance of Turkish interests.

The German Embassy, under Radowitz's direction, gave other proofs of its condescending and kindly disposition in the settling of an unfortunate affair in which the wife of the Secretary of the German Embassy was assaulted by Turkish soldiers in the neighbourhood of Buyuk-Déré. At the same time, the smoothing over of other difficulties of a more or less disagreeable nature, gave Midhat Pasha and the Ottoman Government clearly to understand the excellent intentions of Germany in her dealings with Turkey.

Radowitz, too, always animated by the wish to be amiable to the Porte, and to me personally, willingly acceded to the desire expressed by Ignatieff that he should arrange a reconciliation with me after the Bellotcherkovitz incident. An interview with the Ambassador was therefore arranged, and on this occasion he gave me satisfaction in the form of ample and amiable explanations, while also undertaking to make his subordinate at Tultcha offer me formal excuses. The result of the inquiry made by Nafiz Bey and of the action I had brought against the *Courrier d'Orient* for its defamation had set people right as to the truth of the campaign against me. The Sublime Porte, in agreement with the Russian Embassy, was anxious that Bellotcherkovitz should make me formal and official excuses; so, in obedience to the wishes of the Ministry, and also to protect my personal dignity, I had to return to Tultcha.

I went by way of Varna, Shoumla, and Rustchuk, in order to pay visits to the commander of the Army Corps and the Governor of the vilayet. Abdul-Kerim Pasha, who was always very friendly to me, was very pleased at my visit to Shoumla. After dinner he handed me an order from the Sultan asking him to draw up a general plan of campaign in case of a possible rising of Roumania, Serbia, Greece, and the Bulgarian country. He gave me the material with which to draw up the plan of his reply to the Sultan.

At Rustchuk I had to have an understanding with Mgr. Gregorovius, the Bulgarian Archbishop of that town, on the question of the church at Tultcha, which was in his jurisdiction, and, a few days after I had got back to Tultcha, the Archbishop arrived. During my stay at the capital there had been a quarrel between the Greeks and the Bulgarians for the possession of the church, which up to that time had been under the direction of the Greek Archbishop. Hamdy Pasha, the Governor-General, went to Tultcha to intervene, and he placed seals on the church so as to prevent further disputes between the rival factions. In my opinion, this proceeding, more suited to a tavern, was hardly in consonance with the respect one ought to have for a temple. I ordered the church doors to be reopened, and, in order to settle the matter, it was agreed between the two Archbishops and myself that we should have recourse to a *plébiscite* to find out the exact number of adherents of the Greek Patriarch and those of the Bulgarian Exarchate, so as to hand the church over to the majority. This unpleasant question being settled, and the excuses of the Russian Consul having been duly obtained, I resigned from the governorship of Tultcha, and, having handed the reins of office to my successor, Fahry Bey, I returned to Constantinople, passing by Kustendje, where I had the satisfaction of taking part in the inauguration of the fountains in the town which formed the completion of the work that had been going on for two years.

The good relations between the Sultan and Midhat Pasha did not last long. Midhat Pasha, faithful to his principles of reform and a little blunt in his dealings with the sovereign, had greatly displeased his Majesty, who, since the death of Aali Pasha, had been, as I have said, extremely jealous of his absolute power. Midhat Pasha had made two requests of the Sultan which very much annoyed him. Mahmoud Nedim Pasha had, during his Grand Vizierate, taken £T100,000 (2,300,000 frs.) from the Treasury for which he would give no account. Midhat Pasha insisted with the Sultan that his predecessor must be put on trial and support the consequences of his irregularity. The decree for the trial was signed, but it was almost immediately revoked by a counter-order. The second cause of annoyance was the following: After the death of Aali Pasha, Baron Hirsch came to Constantinople to try and obtain a radical modification of his undertakings concerning the building of the Oriental Railways. In order to attain his ends Hirsch spent millions in baksheesh. One may say it was the inauguration of the system of baksheesh on a large scale—or *à la Européenne*—in Turkey. Mahmoud Nedim Pasha had even had the impudence to compromise the august person of his master, and a sum of £T150,000 (3,100,000 frs.) was offered to the Civil List for the Sultan's personal account. Midhat Pasha was courageous enough to ask the Sultan for the restoration of this sum to the Treasury. It is said that Abd-ul-Aziz, on hearing this request from his Grand Vizier, flushed with rage rather than with shame, and ordered the immediate restoration of the money, putting the blame of the irregularity on Mahmoud Nedim. This act, however, was sufficient to seal the fate of Midhat Pasha. A few days later, on a Friday, the Grand Vizier, accompanied by Kiamil Pasha, President of the Council of State, Edhem Pasha, Minister of Public Works, and other functionaries, went to Ismit to inspect the railway works in construction. On our return to the Bosphorus we found the first Chamberlain of the Sultan had been waiting for Midhat Pasha for several hours in order to ask him to return the Imperial Seal and to announce his dismissal from office. The next day Mehmed Roushdy Pasha was installed in the Grand Vizierate.

CHAPTER V

1873—1876

A SPELL OF THE SIMPLE LIFE—RETURN TO OFFICIAL DUTIES—THE VAGARIES OF ABD-UL-AZIZ—BISMARCK'S AIMS IN THE EAST—THE UNTIRING IRON CHANCELLOR—MY VISIT TO EUROPE—INTERVIEW WITH LORD DERBY—MAHMOUD NEDIM'S INFAMY—DEPOSITION OF ABD-UL-AZIZ—ACCESSION OF SULTAN MURAD.

ON my arrival at Constantinople I found the Porte had reserved for me the Government of Nish. But I had to refuse it for personal reasons. As I had left Albania in my childhood, the active political life I had led had not left me the time to look after my own interests. I had therefore made up my mind to return for a time to private life, and to attend to my own personal affairs. These reasons also kept me from accepting the presidency of the criminal tribunal of Pera, which Midhat Pasha, then Minister of Justice, pressed me to accept, as well as the Legation at Washington, which I especially regretted not being able to take.

Mr. Mayers, the English Consul at Varna, had also retired from the service and was settled at Constantinople, and he and I became partners in a mining enterprise, in pursuance of which we travelled through a portion of Asia Minor and several of the islands of the Archipelago.

The Sultan seemed to take pleasure in creating difficulties on every possible occasion for his Grand Vizier. Before I left on this journey I called on the Grand Vizier, Shirvany Roushdy Pasha, to take leave, and found him very much annoyed at the Sultan's caprices, the reason being the difficulties he was having to persuade the Sultan to receive the Shah of Persia, who was expected, in the regular manner. The etiquette usually followed on occasions of the kind was for the Grand Vizier, with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to go and receive the visiting monarch at the Dardanelles on his way to Constantinople, if he came by the Mediterranean, or at Varna if he came by the Black Sea, while the Sultan would meet the royal visitor on board the vessel on his arrival at Constantinople. On this occasion the Sultan took umbrage that Nazr-ed-Din, the Sovereign of a country bordering on Turkey, instead of starting his trip with a visit to the Sultan, should end up his round of visits with him; and for this reason he would not consent to follow the usual rules of etiquette. He only yielded at the very last moment. Nevertheless, the meeting between the two Monarchs was quite cordial, and the Shah was most deferential to the Ottoman Sovereign. Abd-ul-Aziz disliked his royal cousin's uniform studded with brilliants, and, in order to make fun of the great number of diamonds which he wore, he had the pattens the Shah wore to go to his bath also studded with diamonds. He made Kiamil Pasha invite Nazr-ed-Din to dinner in order that this subject of his might astonish him by making use of the dinner service in diamonds which he had received as a present from his father-in-law, the famous Mehemet Ali of Egypt.

Midhat Pasha had to go to Cheshmé, opposite Scio, to take a cure of the waters of this locality, and I profited by the opportunity to accompany him as far as Mitylene. From there, in company with my friend Chakir Pasha, and the engineer of the mines, M. David, a Frenchman, I went to Aivali to visit the iron and copper mines in the neighbourhood of the town, which we found very rich both in quality and quantity. We spent two days in the mountains far from all habitation, and had a sheep cooked in *al fresco* style by our servants. As a good Albanian, I amused myself by reading the horoscope from the shoulder-blade of the sheep, which indicated that the Governor of the country in which we were had been dismissed. On our return to Aivali we learned that the mountain in which we had been was dependent on the Vilayet of Broussa, and that its Governor-General had just been dismissed. The coincidence greatly amused us. If it had occurred in Albania, it would have given me a great title to clairvoyance in the eyes of my compatriots.

For over a year Mayers and I worked a lignite mine in the island of Imbros, where I passed a good deal of time in superintending the workings. This quiet rustic life gave me a much-desired rest from the many tiring years in the Government service and from political turmoil. Imbros is an ideal spot wherein to spend a quiet life. We passed whole weeks without communication with the outside world. No telegrams came, nor couriers, nor newspapers, nor anything else to disturb our hermit's life amid this beautiful scenery and among a population that is perhaps the quietest and simplest in the world. There are no pleasures there except the songs of young Greeks and the country dances. The sole authority in the place was the *medir* (a sort of mayor appointed by the Government), who was a charming Albanian, and more like the father of this island family than a representative of government. There were four or five gendarmes recruited from among the Greeks of the country, who did not even know where their arms were, so little did they ever find need of using them —and it is doubtful if they would have known how to if the occasion had arisen. Sheep and goats were left, shepherdless, to roam the island at their own sweet will, and there was no danger, since neither wolves nor robbers existed. When one of these animals was needed, all it was necessary to do was to point one of them out to one of the country dogs, which would catch it. The fishing and shooting were extremely good. I shall never forget the delightful months I spent on this island.

But I returned to Constantinople, where I found still another Grand Vizier installed; and, owing to the personal relations I had with Midhat Pasha and other Ministers, I could no longer escape from political preoccupations. The Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz had continued the capricious conduct which he had started during the Grand Vizierate of Mahmoud Nedim Pasha. He still had sufficient scruples not to get rid entirely of his leading Ministers; but, in order to nullify their influence, and prevent them from acting in concert, he had recourse to the system of favouring first one and then another, calling each one in turn to the Grand Vizierate, and all the time watching for a favourable opportunity to recall his real favourite, Mahmoud Nedim Pasha.

The Sultan, who was in many respects a sober man and of great personal dignity, had nevertheless inclinations and tastes of a somewhat vulgar if not grotesque kind. He was fond of wrestling-matches and cock-fights; indeed, his passion for these sports was so great that he was not satisfied with rewarding the human champions, but often also decorated the winning cocks! His low tastes never led him to commit acts of cruelty, like those recorded of the Roman emperors, although in one "sport" he was addicted to a feeble imitation of some of Nero's exploits, when his victims were clothed in skins and thrown to the wild animals. His favourite buffoon was an Armenian named Courban Ossib, who was made to conceal pieces of meat, messes of rice and pilav, and other delicacies beneath his jacket or under his arms, after which the dogs were set on him, and he was rolled over and over by the animals in their efforts to get the food. Such scenes greatly amused the Sultan. When they were over he always gave the victim a few hundred Turkish pounds and told him to go and take a bath. On the other hand, the Sultan had a passion for painting, especially for marine scenes—his ruling passion—and his favourite artist was the famous Russian-Armenian marine painter, Aivasovski. His taste for architecture led him to build palaces, of which the designs and plans were the work of his own imagination, and though these showed some talent, they were always conceived in a taste of Imperial splendour which ran away with millions. Of music also he was fond, but only oriental music. Yet he turned a charming little theatre which his brother, Abd-ul-Medjid, had built near the Palace, into a stable, his horses being another of his passions.

The Khedive of Egypt, Ismail Pasha, stayed for long periods at a time at his palace of Emighian on the Bosphorus, and flattered the Sultan's whims to the utmost. The Sultan even visited him at his residence. Ismail Pasha's representative, Abraham Pasha, was the most influential man at the Palace; and, profiting by the Monarch's weakness, he obtained from him the promise to accord to the Khedive the right of having political representatives at the European Courts. The First Chamberlain, Chefket Pasha, was instructed to handle this political question with Abraham Pasha; but Chefket Pasha's patriotism would not allow him to carry out the proposal, and he informed the Grand Vizier, who interfered and stopped it.

He was always obsessed by a fear of fire, having been greatly impressed by a dream he had had of being enveloped in the flames of an immense conflagration. All possible measures were taken in the interior of the Palace to obviate the danger of fire; and, a prey to the same fear, he had a whole quarter of wooden houses situated on the heights overlooking the Palace of Dolmabatché demolished. These houses disappeared in twenty-four hours. On their site he started to build a mosque that was to rival in splendour the great mosques of Stamboul; but this got no farther than the foundations.

His sense of the respect due to his person and position developed into a megalomania of extraordinary proportions. His Ministers were forced to prostrate themselves before him in a manner which revolted even the oriental conscience, and he was furious against those who did not conform to this requirement. The famous Marshal Abdul-Kerim, who was a very big man, told me that the Sultan was particularly resentful against him because in the audiences he did not prostrate himself as did the other Ministers and Governors, and frequently asked why that great fellow "always stood up before him like a minaret?" "I thought once," said the Marshal, "whether I would not try and do the same as my colleagues; but as a capstan would have been necessary to haul me up again, I desisted."

On one occasion, the architect of the Palace, Serkiss Bey, replying to a question of the Sultan with regard to the progress being made on the building of the new Arms Depôt, satisfied his Majesty that things were going on very well. This particular building interested the Sultan very much, and, commenting on the work, he added, "God, too, is favouring us with fine weather."

Serkiss Bey replied: "Oh, no, Majesty, God does not favour you. He favours poor men like me; He flatters your Majesty!"

This reply so delighted the Sultan that he called the Ministers and said to them, "Not one of you has ever made so clever a remark to me as that. You ought all to go and congratulate this *spirituel* Armenian."

He never pardoned Midhat Pasha for offending his dignity, as he considered it, by coming into his presence wearing spectacles without having first obtained permission!

He was particularly annoyed if anybody but himself had pretensions to possessing a palace or a big house. Fuad Pasha built himself a fine house—the first made of stone in Constantinople—a fact which considerably angered the Sultan, who ordered that it should be handed over to him. At first Fuad Pasha resisted the request, saying to the Chamberlain who came with the message, "Tell your master we are his subjects, and not his slaves, and that what we possess is our own." But finally he had to yield, and he never lived in his house, which afterwards became the Ministry of Finance. On the other hand, Abd-ul-Aziz himself built a mansion for Aali Pasha, though he took it himself after that Minister's death. The large mansion of the German Embassy, situated on the heights overlooking the Palace, greatly irritated him, and he used to complain that the beaks of the eagles which surmounted the building seemed to be penetrating into his brain!

Abd-ul-Aziz's extravagances, meeting with no real opposition, inevitably caused a slackness in the Government and the administration of public affairs. His personal vagaries and eccentricities, deplorable as they were, might have been tolerated if they had not extended to the political and administrative domain, which was thus playing into the hands of Ignatieff, the Russian Ambassador.

But here I must speak of the political aims, with their wide ramifications, that were being pursued by Bismarck, who, like the " man of iron " he was, never became discouraged or gave up his ideas. The frequent changes of Ministry in the Empire, and the consequent uncertainty and instability in Turkish politics, were by no means helpful to his political ambitions, and any other man might have got discouraged. But Bismarck, if ever man did, knew what he wanted, and when he had made up his mind on a course of action, or any object in view, it was seldom that he did not succeed, and it was rarer for him to abandon his project. To understand his aims at Constantinople, one should not forget the previous fourteen years, during which he had waged a political struggle first against the Hapsburg Monarchy, from which he had sought to wrest the domination it had exercised over Germany, using the Confederated States as pawns in the manœuvre to attain mastery over Central Europe; then against France and the other Great Powers, some of which justified their interference in Germany's affairs by its political divisions, while others opposed

German unification; and, of all his enemies, the most formidable were the German States themselves and their particularism, which was so difficult to break down. Three great and successful wars—one against Denmark, which had given Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia; one against Austria, and finally one against France—had had, as their result, the elimination of all foreign influences and the completion of that remarkable work, the German Empire under the sceptre of the Hohenzollerns. The military successes of Prussia and the Confederated States had not only secured political preponderance for the German Empire, but had forced the other Powers unwillingly to leave to her this place of honour in the European Concert.

Bismarck, as I have said, never rested on his laurels. A profound psychologist and sure judge of human nature, an expert in the mentality and morality of statesmen, he devoted himself to the task of seeking political combinations likely to strengthen the future of unified Germany, and to set aside all obstacles to the fulfilment of her destiny, of which the formation of the Empire was but the first step. Although aware that the Czar Alexander II. had a real affection for his uncle, the Emperor William, and that the disposition of the Emperor-King Francis Joseph was pacific, the Iron Chancellor, nevertheless, did not consider these facts as sufficient reasons either for the Russians to abandon their secular dream of possessing Constantinople —a longing that had only been whetted by the Black Sea success—or for Austria-Hungary to abandon all idea of revenge. The well-known hatred of Count Beust, Chancellor of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, for Bismarck, and the jealousy of Prince Gortschakow, all the more inflamed since the Germans' recent victories, gave Bismarck sufficient cause for anxiety.

Now the only basis for an *entente* in either direction, and the sole pivot of a coalition, had necessarily to be the East. Already, guided by his intuition, he had firmly made up his mind on this point at the time of the treaty of peace with Austria at Nicholsburg. But, until he could succeed in eliminating the difficulties on both sides, and achieve his genial plan of an alliance with the conquered enemy of yesterday, it was manifestly wise for him to make sure of the East and prevent its escaping him for good. Hence he set himself methodically and calmly to the task, on the one hand, of fostering relations with the two Empires by holding before them the prospect of a triple alliance, and, on the other hand, of putting Turkey on her guard and keeping her, if possible, safe from all danger of being absorbed by others.

While the three Emperors and their Chancellors, during frequent visits to each other, were exchanging views on the possibility of arriving at a Triple Alliance, Bismarck's confidential men, such as Radowitz, and later on Count Keudell, were sent by him to investigate the ground in the East, to take necessary precautions, and prevent any danger of a seizure of Turkey by her neighbours. After 1871 Bismarck had one single preoccupation, namely, to prevent the other Great Powers from forming a coalition, the central point of which should be France and the moving power the East. He was always afraid of events tending towards an alliance of France with Russia or Austria-Hungary ; but what he feared above all was that Russia might come to an understanding with Austria-Hungary in order to arrive at a compromise on their Eastern interests regardless of Germany. With regard to France, her Republican form of Government seemed in a way to keep her at a distance from Russia and Austria-Hungary, who were defenders of the monarchical principle. It remained for him, then, to choose between the two Empires for an effective alliance. An alliance with Russia would doubtless have strengthened the dominant position of the German Empire in Europe, but this advantage would have been gained at the expense of the abandonment of the East to the Russians. On the other hand, it was plain that an Empire having a geographical position like that of Germany, and a rapidly increasing population, could not be satisfied with her territory in Europe, with no possibility of extending her economic and industrial domains, which, ever since the creation of the Empire, had assumed great importance. Such chances of extension could only be realised in the East.

Such being his objects, Bismarck laid his plans in order to render the Austrian Alliance a fundamental law of the two nations, a law which could not be easily upset by the divergencies of political parties. His object was to make of Austria a " sub-Germany." At the same time he must show a fair face to Russia on the question of Constantinople, while making the other Powers believe that he was acting as a watch-dog upon Russia's intentions. Bismarck, of course, had not less foresight than Frederick the Great, who said that " if the Russians were to take Constantinople, a year later they would be at Königsberg " ; nor was he less of a political realist than the Dietrich Bulows, the Moritz Andts, the Ludwig Jahns, the Friedrich Lists, who had defined Pan-German interests, who had traced their road and indicated the means of reaching it.

Bismarck also understood the psychology of the Turk, and knew pretty well what he was capable of doing. He knew that the Turks, like all Orientals, are impressed solely by military power and by religious questions. The military organisation of the Brandenburgs and the exploits of Frederick the Great had been spread in the East long before the legendary victories of the great Napoleon. The later victories of Germany only caused the oriental imagination to work even more in favour of the descendants of the Brandenburgs. In religious questions, again, German influence in the East had long been important. Luther's reform had stirred the Mussulman conscience to such an extent that, as far back as the time of the Sultan Ibrahim, a special mission had been sent to Germany with the object of protecting these religious reformers, whose doctrine, it was believed, was tending to approach that of Islam.

Steadfast in these aims, and determined to follow out his ideas, Bismarck therefore continued to manœuvre on the political field of the Orient. His confidential man, Count Keudell, was now sent to represent the German Empire at the Sultan's Court, and to make another attempt at a political *rapprochement*.

The main object now was to arrange for the political independence of Roumania, and the conclusion of a military convention between Turkey and independent Roumania. Dimitri Bratiano, brother of Jean Bratiano, with whom Bismarck continued to have the closest relations, who was at Constantinople with the Chancellor's emissaries, held himself ready to open up negotiations if the temptation presented itself and there seemed a chance of arriving at the desired result. It is well known that Bismarck never concealed from the reigning Prince Charles his desire and hope of seeing Roumania become the Belgium of the East. But at the critical moment when Charles Hohenzollern was struggling with discontent and uprising in his country, Bismarck went no farther than encouraging him morally and advising him to get on good terms with the Grand Vizier, Aali Pasha. Having entered upon the war with France, he did not wish to start a Roumanian question which might upset the harmony that had been established between Germany and Russia.

At the time of which I am now speaking, however, when the German Empire was established on a solid basis, and the enmity between Bismarck and the Russian Chancellor was steadily increasing, the Iron Chancellor saw in the above combination a serious advantage. An independent Roumania, united in a strong coalition with Turkey, would safeguard the latter from all danger of aggression on the part of Russia. It would bolt and bar the road to Constantinople.

Bismarck knew that, some years before, Aali Pasha, in a confidential conversation with Count Beust at Constantinople, had shown himself disposed and even willing to abandon Roumania to the Hapsburg Monarchy. The prospect of Roumania's incorporation in the Danubian Monarchy, or even of her gaining her independence under such auspices, was, in the eyes of Bismarck, like the presage of an Austro-Russian Alliance, as Roumania would in that case be the motive and the stake of an *entente* between the two Eastern Empires other than Germany.

Therefore, if he could be the means of bringing about this Roumanian independence, by direct *entente* between the Suzerain Court and the vassal, he would, on the one hand, be strengthening the political position of the Ottoman Empire, and, on the other hand, he would prevent Austria-Hungary from concluding any alliance with Russia.

I myself, as well as the Ministers with whom I examined this discreetly suggested combination, recognised the advantages which would accrue from it for us. But, unfortunately, the Government's instability and the frequent changes of Ministry were the reasons for the non-realisation of a policy that would have been truly patriotic from the Turkish point of view. Keudell, disappointed, was recalled from Constantinople and sent to Rome.

Once more, on the eve of the Russo-Turkish War, the same Dimitri Bratiano was entrusted at Constantinople with the task of pleading the cause of the neutrality of the Principality of Roumania. I was then General Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and I worked hard in the same direction. But again the stupidity of the Porte, or some strange and unfortunate fatality, caused the failure of a scheme which would have been of signal value to Turkey in a war against Russia.

As every one knows, the independence of Roumania became a *fait accompli* in 1878, but then the result was not to protect Turkey against Russia, but rather to have the contrary effect, since Bessarabia had become a Russian province, and Russia also had the Kilia arm of the Danube.

Bismarck, nevertheless, continued to push his views concerning Turkey. In spite of his pretended disinterestedness, when it was decided to send German officers and officials to Turkey to help organise her army and the civil and financial administration, in answer to those who had doubts as to whether such arrangements might be agreeable to the other Powers, he replied that, when Prussia was on the best terms with Russia, the Turkish artillery was organised by Prussian officers. Insisting as he did upon keeping a hand on Turkey, and, above all, on Asia Minor, he considered that Germany would reap much advantage by sending her officers and functionaries to those countries. In the first place, Germany would have at her command a number of officials who knew and had studied these regions, and these at some time or another might be able to render great service. Through them Turkey's condition would be improved, and her defensive position would not lack importance for Germany herself if ever a war due to Pan-Slavism or Chauvinism were to be declared against Germany. " In such a case," he added, " the Turkish forces and their state of defence would not be a matter of indifference to us, all the more so as their enemies might some day become ours."

The war of 1914–18 demonstrates the foresight of Prince Bismarck. But would matters have reached the point that we see to-day, when the traditional friends of Turkey have become her enemies, if Bismarck or his policy had survived ? I hardly think so.

The Turkish Ministers, who were in accord on the general lines of policy, and fretted under the paralysis of all governmental effort, became confirmed in their determination to adopt radical measures against Abd-ul-Aziz's eccentricities. The drastic remedy of deposition was discussed, and I was one of the few who were opposed to this plan, as I argued that Abd-ul-Aziz was possessed of sufficient good qualities to make a useful monarch, if he were properly led, as was shown by his early career when the wise Aali Pasha was alive to guide him.

Midhat Pasha, then Minister of Justice, drew up a project of organic statutes which comprised a responsible Ministry, and inaugurated the era of the people's right to control the national finances. When the Sultan got wind of this proposal, through an indiscretion, he became so furious that he dismissed Midhat Pasha from the Ministry and sent him as Governor-General to Salonika (where he only remained a month), while he replaced the Grand Vizier by Hussein Avny Pasha.

Sir Henry Elliot, who took a real interest in the welfare of the Empire, and whom I saw frequently, never missed an opportunity of making friendly and useful suggestions to the Sultan. Furthermore, a group of British members of Parliament, with whom I kept up a continual correspondence, took up the matter (and among them I remember the names of Messrs. York, Wyndham, and Bruce). Keeping themselves *au courant* with what was going on by the reports which I sent, by debates in Parliament and otherwise, they drew the attention of the British Government to the condition of Turkey.

Hussein Avny Pasha, now Grand Vizier, invited me to go and see him, when he reproached me bitterly for remaining so long out of public affairs, and begged me to accept another post. While thanking him, I persisted in my desire to remain at liberty still some time longer, as I wished to visit Albania, and also to undertake a journey to Europe.

So in July 1875 I left Constantinople, accompanied by Chakir Pasha, who, being also at that moment at liberty, gladly accepted my invitation that we should visit my native country together. We had the pleasure of travelling from Constantinople with his Highness Prince Halim

Pasha, of Egypt, who was going to Europe via Trieste. At Valona, where we arrived after a four days' journey by sea, my uncle Selim Pasha received us.

During our stay at Valona, the political complications arising out of the insurrection in Bosnia and Herzegovina having brought about a favourable opportunity for appointing a Coalition Ministry, Mahmoud Nedim Pasha was called to the presidency of this Ministry. I was deeply dejected at the submission of Midhat Pasha and other statesmen to this combination, which was only the accomplishment of the Sultan's desire to have his favourite again as Grand Vizier. Several days after the formation of this Cabinet, we received telegrams announcing the appointment of my friend, Chakir Pasha, as Governor of Herzegovina, with orders to leave immediately for his post, and inviting me to go to Constantinople and return to the service.

However, as my uncle Selim Pasha had fallen seriously ill, and I for particular reasons did not wish to return to the capital again before having visited Europe, my uncle and I started for Naples, where he was to get medical advice.

At Corfu my uncle died. After I had superintended the despatch of his body to Valona by special boat, I myself left for Naples. My two domestics had also returned to Constantinople, and so for the first time in my life I found myself alone in a foreign country without servants. I especially missed my old attendant, Fehim, an Albanian, who had accompanied me everywhere ever since my childhood. This change and the loss of my uncle saddened me, but a few days later I went on to Rome, where, fortunately, I found Alexander Pasha, the Turkish Minister, whose friendly reception dissipated this feeling of loneliness. From Rome I went to Milan, with the intention of being present at the arrival of William I. of Germany, who was going to pay a visit to Victor Emmanuel II. But at Milan there was such a concourse of people that it was impossible to find a place in an hotel; so, after waiting for ten hours in the station, I was able to take the train for Paris. In Paris I stayed just three days—sufficient time to visit the Turkish Ambassador, Ali Pasha, an old friend of mine.

In London, where I had many friends, I spent two months. I was received by the then Foreign Minister, Lord Derby, and by Sir Stafford Northcote (later Lord Iddesleigh), Chancellor of the Exchequer. The chief object of my stay in London was to explain the situation of Turkey to Lord Derby and to make a study of the finances and the local government of Great Britain. Sir Stafford Northcote recommended me to Mr. (later Baron) Welby, Permanent Secretary to the Treasury, who put me *au courant* with all the financial questions which interested me, while Sir —— Adler, who was then at the head of the Excise Department, also supplied me with all I needed for a thorough study of the question of indirect taxation.

My old friend, Sir Robert Yell, who was in Scotland, having retired from the consular service, invited me to go and spend some time with him, and make my studies of local government on the spot. I met him at Berwick-on-Tweed, where he was waiting for me, but, as his own castle of Binns was under repair, he took me to his uncle, Mr. Wilkie's, place, Foulding, where we spent a week. There I first met Mrs. Coddington, one of the most beautiful and charming Englishwomen I ever met. During our stay we were entertained by the families of Mr. Michelay and Mr. Hume, and so I had opportunities of appreciating the charms of English country life. At Foulding, thanks to Mr. Wilkie and the local clergyman, I was able to satisfy my desire to gain information on the workings of parochial administration, and I was present at meetings of the parish council.

Sir R. Yell also accompanied me to Edinburgh, where we spent three days, and from there we visited Linlithgow. I shall never forget the pleasant days I passed in this beautiful country with such charming people, but the thing that perhaps struck me most was the hospitality of the people of Linlithgow. As we were waiting in the station to take our train back, a number of people who had learned that a stranger from the East was there, came to see me and invited me to go back and pass a few hours with them. When I thanked them, and said I really had not the time, as the train was shortly leaving, they tried to deceive me by saying there would be no more trains that evening. Sir Robert Yell intervened, and they justified their well-meant fib by telling me the patron saint of their town was St. Michael, who was also the patron of strangers, and therefore it was their duty to show hospitality to visitors!

I considered, as I have said, that the deposition of the Sultan, which had now been decided upon at Constantinople, would be extremely injurious for the country. Abd-ul-Aziz, whose eccentricities were due to the excessive development of qualities essentially worthy of respect which were innate to his birth and position, needed guiding by firm Ministers. To depose him, and thus weaken the power of the Sovereignty among so heterogeneous a population as that which constituted the various portions of the Empire, would be likely to have grave consequences. Hence it behoved me to do all in my power to prevent such a catastrophe, as I judged this might be.

In my conversation with Lord Derby, who wished to get from me an *exposé* of the situation in Turkey, I told him frankly my fears, and added that there was only one Power which could avert this threatened danger, and that was England, as there was no element of thought in the Empire which did not believe that Great Britain was the friend of Turkey and would go out of her way to do the Empire good. They would therefore know that advice coming from England was sincerely meant, and was salutary, and the Sultan, equally convinced of this fact, would yield to recommendations coming from Great Britain.

The Foreign Minister was very much impressed with what I told him and seemed to realise the gravity of the situation. He said he would inform his colleagues of what had passed between us, but added that, whatever the British Cabinet decided upon doing, I need not expect to receive an answer on this question. I assured him that this was not my desire, but that, on the contrary, I should prefer to be forgotten in the matter, since I had acted as a simple patriot and not as the trustee of an official or semi-official mission.

Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, who was the evil genius of the Empire, on his return to power, resumed the practices that were so evil for the country as well as for the Sultan. Acting all through and in everything on the inspiration of General Ignatieff, who was preparing the last blow against the Empire, he adopted the device of suspending the payment of the coupons of the Ottoman Debt. I was in London when I learned of this measure, which threw the Empire into discredit with the public of the Western countries, especially the English. I was extremely indignant, not so much against Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, from whom I did not expect much else, but against my friend, Midhat Pasha, and his colleagues, who countenanced such an act. I at once wrote a letter to Midhat Pasha expressing my disapproval in the most violent terms. Midhat Pasha was not slow in realising the political error into which he had fallen, and, in order to try and repair the evil, immediately handed his resignation to the Sultan in a letter, a copy of which I found on my return to Paris with Sadik Pasha, the new Turkish Ambassador.

I stayed two months in Paris, and while there made a similar study on economical subjects to that which I had undertaken in England. M. Bourrée, the ex-Ambassador, now in retirement, and Baron d'Avril, my old colleague of the Danube Commission, helped me to gain access to the various Ministerial departments. Thanks also to the kindly aid of Sadik Pasha, I was able to conclude a preliminary convention with a M. Desmasures, Director of the Compagnie Asphaltine, for the exploitation of the bitumen mines of Selinitza at Valona, of which I had acquired the concession.

I returned by way of Italy to Valona, where a few days later M. Desmasures joined me to study on the spot the resources of the mine. While at Valona I received a letter from Odian Effendi informing me of the approaching realisation of the patriotic project of Midhat Pasha—namely, the deposition of the Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz. A couple of weeks later M. Bertrand, the director of the cable, came to hand me a copy of the official telegram from the Grand Vizier, Mehmed Roushdy Pasha, to the Great Powers announcing that the Sultan Aziz had been dethroned by the will of the people, and that Murad V. had been proclaimed Sultan of Turkey. This news produced such an impression on me that for some moments I could not find words to impart it to the judge of the town and other Albanian notables who were with me. The first telegram was quickly followed by another which announced the accession of the new Sultan to the population, who received the news with transports of joy.

This is how this sensational event had taken place at Constantinople. Mahmoud Nedim Pasha had become so unpopular that threats were made to assassinate him. The *softas* (or theological students) went so far as to measure publicly the height of the railings in front of the Sublime Porte, in order, as they said, to find out whether they were suitable to hang the Grand Vizier on. These manifestations at last alarmed Abd-ul-Aziz, who, in order to calm public feeling, discharged Mahmoud and appointed Mehmed Roushdy Pasha Grand Vizier, Midhat Pasha, Hussein Avny Pasha, and others being also in the Ministry. On this occasion the Sultan called each of the Ministers to him in turn, and told them that the arrangement was only a temporary one, and that he would shortly make other dispositions more suitable to each one he spoke to. Thus he told Mehmed Roushdy Pasha that he, who was regarded as the father of the people, would soon be placed in absolute power under himself; he informed Midhat Pasha that the Ministry would shortly be dismissed and he would be appointed Constitutional Grand Vizier and entrusted with the promulgation of a Liberal régime; and so on with the others. When the Ministers got together they naturally compared notes and discovered the full extent of the Sultan's duplicity. They decided at once upon his deposition, and fixed the event for the following Thursday.

On the Monday night the Sultan summoned Hussein Avny Pasha, Minister of War, by an urgent message. The Minister, thinking that this summons was an indication that the Sultan had learned of what was going forward, did not obey. Sent for a second time, he returned a reply that he was ill and would wait on His Majesty in the morning. He immediately invited his colleagues to his house, and a Council took place in the night, when they decided to proceed at once to the deposition of the Monarch.

After midnight Hussein Avny Pasha went to the Palace of the Heir-Presumptive, Murad, to bring him to the Ministry for War, where he was proclaimed.

Abd-ul-Aziz was awakened by the sound of the cannon which announced the accession of his successor. Redif Pasha, the Commander of the First Army Corps, was entrusted with the task of informing Abd-ul-Aziz of the wish of the people that he should cease to reign, and of the decision to transfer him to the Old Seraglio at Byzantium. With great sang-froid and resignation, the Sultan submitted to the inevitable, and was embarked on a caïque with five pairs of oars with his son. He carried in his hand the sword of his great uncle, Selim III., which that Monarch had carried with him when he suffered the same fate. Two days later, Abd-ul-Aziz wrote a letter to the Sultan Murad announcing his abdication in the latter's favour, and begging that he might be transferred to another palace, as the Old Seraglio reminded him of tragic scenes connected with his predecessors. He was moved to one of the pavilions of the Palace of Tchiragan, on the Bosphorus, where, the morning after his arrival, he committed suicide by opening his veins with a small pair of scissors.

CHAPTER VI

1876

THE ACCESSION OF MURAD V.—HIS GROWING MENTAL ABERRATION—THE MURDER OF THE MINISTERS—THE DEPOSITION OF MURAD—ACCESSION OF ABD-UL-HAMID.

THE day after the reception of the telegram announcing the new Sultan's accession, I was expecting M. Karapanos, who was coming to Valona to study the financial side of my bitumen mining enterprise. I was on my way to the quay to meet him when I received a letter from him asking me to go and meet him at Corfu, as he had to go to Constantinople to offer his congratulations to the new Sultan with his father-in-law, Christaki Effendi, Sultan Murad's banker.

It was while we were at Corfu that we received the sad news of the suicide of Abd-ul-Aziz.

After this meeting I returned, for my part, to Valona, and here, a day or two later, I learned of the assassination of the Ministers.

This was a terrible affair. The Ministerial Council had assembled at the house of Midhat Pasha at Stamboul, when Cherkes Hassan, captain of infantry and ex-aide-de-camp to Prince Izeddin, the son of Abd-ul-Aziz, came and asked to be taken to Hussein Avny Pasha, for whom he said he had an urgent communication. He rushed into the room where the Ministers were sitting, went straight up to Hussein Avny, calling out, "Don't move!" and fired at him with a revolver. The shot entered the lower part of the Minister's body, wounding him mortally, and, as he rose to totter out, the assassin finished him with a knife. A panic followed, and the other persons present fled. Only Rashid Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs—who is believed to have been seized with a syncope, and was perhaps already dead—remained motionless in his arm-chair beside that of Hussein Avny. The assassin fired a bullet into his head, which lodged in such a position that, since he did not fall from or move in his chair, it could only be presumed he was no longer living. Then Cherkes Hassan tried to burst open the door of the room where the Grand Vizier and the other Ministers had taken refuge, but Kaiserli Ahmed (now Minister of Marine), and Ahmed, Midhat Pasha's Albanian servant, succeeded in seizing him. Though they held him by the arms, he was still able to attack. He slashed the nose and ears of the Minister, and killed Ahmed with a shot from his revolver in the head. Soldiers had by now, however, arrived, and he was overcome, though not before he had killed the aide-de-camp of the War Minister. He was found to be in possession of four revolvers, two in his pockets and two in his boots, besides his terrible knife (known as the *camia*).

Fearing that this murder of the Ministers was part of a general movement, I got into communication by telegraph with my family at Constantinople, and learned from them the facts. A few days later M. Karapanos came and joined me, and brought further details of what had taken place at Constantinople. He also gave me confidential particulars of the symptoms of the new Sultan's illness.

Murad V., the eldest son of Abd-ul-Medjid and brother of his more famous successor, Abd-ul-Hamid, possessed a nature of considerable nobility, and was of superior intelligence. Early in life he delighted in the study of literature and science, and familiarised himself with Western civilisation and ways of thought. With such a character he could not but have aspirations towards liberalism. His father, before he died, recommended Murad specially to the care of his uncle Abd-ul-Aziz, and in the first period of the latter's reign Murad was given ample liberty, and nothing was put in the way of the development of his character.

But, after a time, Murad's intellectual and moral superiority began to annoy the Sultan, who feared his liberal tendencies and his growing popularity. Abd-ul-Aziz was especially impressed by the favour his nephew enjoyed during the visits they made together, in 1867, to the English and French Courts; and on their return to Constantinople the Sultan insisted on his living a life of strict retirement. In spite, however, of the close watch kept over his acts, Murad succeeded in keeping up his relations with a number of persons in the political spheres of his own country and with different distinguished personalities in Europe, the result of which was rather to increase his liberal ideas and aspirations.

There was, in fact, but one shadow over this portrait of a future chief of State such as Turkey might well have hoped to find. Oppressed by the miserable and solitary life which his uncle insisted upon his leading, he gave way to some extent to indulgence in alcoholic liquors. This led to nervous troubles, and helped to bring about the total eclipse of his once fine intellect.

He showed the first signs of mental derangement on the very day that Hussein Avny Pasha came to take him to the Ministry where he was to be proclaimed Sovereign. It was all his counsellors could do to persuade him to allow himself to be taken from his Palace to the Ministry of War. It is to be supposed—if one can presume to try to read this already disordered brain—that Murad, in the act of assuming the sovereign power, was haunted by his desire to establish a liberal régime—always an ardent dream of his—and by the anxiety for justifying the confidence which the people had reposed in him. He was obsessed by the fear of not being able to realise this dream, and so dissatisfying his people.

When, a day or two after his accession, Abd-ul-Aziz committed suicide, Murad was struck with a real horror, which was immensely increased by the assassination of the Ministers. These events, which might indeed have shaken a more solid intellect than his, gave a terrible and almost fatal shock to his troubled spirit. He lost his sleep, and spent whole nights in walking about the Palace, sending for the Grand Vizier and others of the Ministers one after another. Through all his terror and confusion he was haunted by the fixed idea that he was losing the affections of his people and that they were discontented ; he thought he was surrounded by hatred, and that all his projects were doomed to failure. In vain his Ministers tried to assure him that the people had not lost their hope or confidence in him. These assurances only resulted in calming him for a few moments at a time.

One night he sent in great haste for his First Secretary, Saadullah, and with haggard eyes, and a prey to every terror, he proposed that they should flee at once to escape from the rage of the populace, who to his demented ears were already crying for vengeance against him.

In spite of the personal matters which called for a prolongation of my stay at Valona, I yielded to the reiterated requests of Midhat Pasha that I should go back to Constantinople. As soon as I saw him, the President of the Council of State made remarks that were almost reproachful on the subject of my conversation with Lord Derby in London concerning the deposition of Abd-ul-Aziz. Though submissive in face of his disapproval, I nevertheless insisted on my first judgment having been well-founded, nor did I conceal from him my fears of the consequences of what was now a *fait accompli*, though hoping that they would not be realised.

Midhat Pasha and all his colleagues in the Ministry were extremely troubled about the new Sultan's illness. And they might well be nonplussed to find a remedy for the situation in which they now found themselves—a Government that had assumed such tremendous responsibilities in face of the nation and of history at so critical a period for the Empire, when they were powerless to act. Their difficulties were not decreased by the fact that they maintained absolute silence as to the Sultan's condition, and, to keep the secret, had to resort to all sorts of subterfuges. As the Sultan was supposed to appear in public every Friday at the Selamlik, the rumour was spread, to explain his absence, that he was suffering from abscesses on the shoulders which prevented him from donning a uniform. Afterwards he was taken to the Selamlik, and endless precautions had to be resorted to to prevent his revealing the true state of affairs himself.

I did not have a chance at this time of talking to Midhat Pasha about the facts of Abd-ul-Aziz's death, or of referring to the story, already current in certain circles, which alleged murder as the cause rather than suicide. But one evening, some time later, when we were again talking of the grave perplexity caused by the madness of Murad, he gave me and others clearly to understand that he had no doubt as to the suicide. He declared that Abd-ul-Aziz had really rendered a great service to the Empire, and had expiated all the wrong he had done, in dying by his own hand.

This conviction of Midhat Pasha's was confirmed later by facts told me by persons who had been attached to the service of the late Sultan until the end. Furthermore, undoubted proofs of his having committed suicide were to be found in the reports of the doctors of all the Embassies, notably that of Dr. Dixon, attached to the British Embassy, who, with the other doctors, made a post-mortem examination. The size and physical strength of Abd-ul-Aziz rendered it impossible for him to have been assassinated without a struggle. Had a struggle taken place, the wounds would never have shown the precise and deliberate character that they possessed; and, in any case, the incisions in the veins could never have been carried out by another, even had he been possessed of the experience and skill of a surgeon, in such a way as to give the appearance of suicide.

A few days after my return to Constantinople I was appointed Secretary-General for matters in litigation (*les contentieux*) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The illness of the Sultan increased, and the difficulties of the Cabinet grew in proportion. Almost every evening Midhat Pasha and I talked about the situation and about possible remedies. One day, when I was visiting Sir Henry Elliot at Therapia, the British Ambassador urged on me the great need of the Imperial Government's finding a prompt and legal solution of the difficulty. He suggested the appointment of a Regency, but I objected that, as the Sultan was at the same time Caliph, and that, as the loss of mental faculties according to the fundamental law implied decay, a Regency was out of the question. Nevertheless, Sir Henry insisted that I should draw the Ministers' attention to the impossibility of prolonging the existing state of affairs. As a matter of fact, as he justly pointed out, the Ambassadors and Ministers had for months been waiting for an opportunity of presenting their letters of credence to the Sultan, and this had stopped the carrying out of all business. How could the Ottoman Empire keep at its head a Sovereign who was incapable of assuming responsibility or the initiative of power at a moment when she was terminating a war with Serbia and Montenegro, and was on the eve probably of a war with Russia?

I repeated the British Ambassador's opinion faithfully to Midhat Pasha and the Grand Vizier. The former agreed entirely with Sir Henry, but the Grand Vizier pleaded for more time, as he persisted in hoping in a possible improvement in Murad's condition. Midhat Pasha pushed his views, and went so far as to threaten to resign from a

Cabinet which sanctioned its own recommendations in default of an effective head of the State, thus governing and reigning at one and the same time.

On this it was decided to send immediately for Dr. Leidsdorff, of Vienna. He had already once examined the Sultan, and on that occasion had drawn up the following report:

> "His Majesty has for some time been suffering from a stubborn insomnia, caused by the shock of recent events. This prolonged insomnia, which has finally been mitigated by suitable treatment, has nevertheless left his Majesty's nervous system in a state of excitement which for some time to come will still necessitate much rest, care and treatment."

Now, after this second consultation, Dr. Leidsdorff issued a more definite report, in which he declared that Murad's brain was gradually liquefying, and that he believed he was incurable, though there might be slight temporary improvement.

Accordingly, in spite of the reluctance of the Grand Vizier, and the interest all the Ministers had in maintaining Murad on the throne if it had been possible, the Monarch's deposition was decided upon.

Abd-ul-Hamid was the logical successor to his brother, but Midhat Pasha and the Ministers who had deposed Abd-ul-Aziz with the idea of bringing about a liberal régime, insisted upon obtaining preliminary guarantees from the Prince Heir. Midhat Pasha had an interview with Abd-ul-Hamid at the palace of his mother the Sultanieh Validée, at Nichan-Tach (August 27th, 1876). He read to him the proposed basis of a Constitution which was to be drawn up and promulgated; Abd-ul-Hamid gave his approval and adhesion under oath.

There remained nothing to do but to carry out the deposition of Murad in the form prescribed by the sacred law and the proclamation of the new Sultan. The date fixed was August 31st.

The evening before I, with others, was at Midhat Pasha's house at Emir-Ghian, on the Bosphorus, where we were to spend the night so as to be ready to start early the next morning for the Old Seraglio, where the ceremony was to take place. The great poet Kemal Bey, one of the chiefs of the Young Turks, who was much attached to Murad, came to supplicate Midhat Pasha, with tears in his eyes, to postpone the deposition of the Sultan. But this supreme effort of a devoted subject fell on ears no longer able to listen.

The next morning we left on a small steamboat for the Old Seraglio. *En route* Midhat Pasha read us the *Hatt* (or Rescript) which he had drawn up for the proclamation. Abd-ul-Hamid was waiting for us at the Kiosque. The Ministers, Councillors of State, dignitaries and officers of the various arms congregated at the Koubé-Alti, and there the Grand Vizier, Mehmed Roushdy Pasha, addressed the Sheikh-ul-Islam in these words, " We had a Sovereign who was an angel. But God, of his Supreme Will, has struck him with an incurable malady which requires of us the cruel sacrifice of his Sovereignty."

Midhat Pasha also gave detailed explanations concerning Murad's illness, declaring that everything possible had been done to cure him. The Grand Vizier asked what the *Cheriat*, or the sacred law, commanded in such a case. The Sheikh-ul-Islam, supported by the Ulema present—Seif-ud-Din—replied that in the case of persistent madness the deposition of the Caliph was essential.

This opinion having been noted by the Grand Vizier, and Abd-ul-Hamid having been declared the new Sultan, all present followed the Grand Vizier in rendering homage. The ceremony of the consecration of a Sultan is similar to the ceremony of Bairam, and after the Ministers have retired, everybody is admitted to pass before His Majesty, dignitaries mixing with the common people regardless of any question of precedence.

In spite of the official acclamations, the impression caused by the accession of Abd-ul-Hamid was very different from the public joy on the accession of Murad. There was on this occasion an atmosphere of sadness—almost of mourning—among the populace, and the sounds of the cannon, far from awakening popular enthusiasm, seemed to arouse an almost funereal echo.

After the ceremony the new Sultan retired to the apartment where the relics and flags of the Prophet are kept. Here he prayed for several hours in an affectation of profound abstraction. Meanwhile, Saadullah Bey, the first Secretary of poor Murad, came and told us of the difficulties they had met with in trying to make the mad Sultan leave the Palace of Dolma-Batché, where Abd-ul-Hamid was to be installed. Murad, though utterly demented, realised that he was being deposed, and resisted his transference with great violence. Shefket Pasha, Marshal of the Court, a very strong man, was obliged to take him in his arms and put him forcibly in his carriage. He was conveyed to the Palace of Tchiragan, whence only death delivered him after twenty-eight years of captivity.

On the two following days the new Sultan left the doors of the Palace wide open to all who wished to come and congratulate him, and all classes of the population of Constantinople and the foreign colonies were welcomed. His manner in receiving was really affable, and impressed all who saw him at the time. He treated the Grand Vizier and Midhat Pasha with especial courtesy and charm.

During the Vizierate of Midhat Pasha, Murad was looked after and treated in a way suited to his rank. His mother, a person of great energy, not only cared for him herself, but imposed her will to obtain everything necessary for the ex-Monarch and his family. Abd-ul-Hamid used to send delicacies to his unfortunate brother, such as champagne and other beverages, sealing them himself with his own seal to avoid any possibility of foul play.

But political events which followed, and especially the stupid plot of Ali Suavy, at the very moment when the Russian Army was before the walls of Constantinople, combined to change the existence of Murad and his family for the worse. Ali Suavy, with about a hundred Roumelian refugees whom he had inveigled into the plot, entered the Palace of Tchiragan in broad daylight, and by main force dragged out the unfortunate Murad on the pretence that he was going to be reproclaimed Sultan. Troops were at once summoned, and Ali Suavy was killed with several of his fellow conspirators, while others were arrested. Murad was found at the head of the staircase with a gun in his hand.

After this the Sultan took very severe precautionary measures to avoid any recurrence of such an act.

The long years of captivity in his Palace did not perhaps affect Murad much, as he was not conscious of the restraint, but for his son and his two daughters it was a terrible martyrdom, confined as they were during all those years to the gilded walls of the Palace with their demented father. They were not allowed even to show themselves at the windows, while the Palace was always closely guarded by troops to prevent any communication with the outside world. There was a time when Abd-ul-Hamid offered to let his brother's daughters issue from this cloistral seclusion, but then they refused to leave their father. For Murad's son there was no escape.

There were not lacking evil tongues who maintained that Abd-ul-Hamid was keeping his brother under restraint wrongfully, and with the knowledge that he was not at all mad. Many of the State functionaries thought that a treatment which would allow the unfortunate Murad more liberty would not only be an act of humanity, but also of political wisdom. The people would be able to see for themselves the real condition of the crazy ex-Monarch and the fables would cease. But the Sultan was inflexible. The first victim of these efforts was the brave Sadik Pasha, who was Grand Vizier during the foolish attempt of Suavy, and intervened in favour of Murad on the recommendation of the British Ambassador. Discharged from office, he was exiled to the island of Lemnos, where he ended his days.

CHAPTER VII

1876—1877

The Bulgarian rising and its repression—Russia's hand—My work on the two commissions of inquiry—Terrible sights—Difficulties with the English representatives—Turkey's new Constitution—Midhat Pasha Grand Vizier—His difficulties—The Sultan's duplicity and intrigues.

In spite of the graciousness of demeanour shown by Abd-ul-Hamid, which was actually a little revolution in Court etiquette, there were other signs that gave those around him to understand that the Sultan had a will and intended to use it, to say nothing of a certain dissimulation behind his acts. One of these facts was the changes in the text of the *Hatt*—which promised a Constitution compatible with the aptitudes and the manners of the people—which were introduced by the Sultan without consulting the Grand Vizier or even Midhat Pasha, who was the author of the project. The other point was the spontaneous nomination of Said Bey (later Pasha) and of Lebib Effendi as first and second secretaries, and of Damat Mahmoud Pasha as Marshal of the Court, contrary to the rule so far followed which required that these functionaries should be nominated on the proposition of the Grand Vizier.

The Government of the Sublime Porte had two serious causes for anxiety at this time—the questions of Bosnia and Herzegovina and of Bulgaria. The first of these questions, having provoked a war between the Suzerain Court and the two vassal Principalities, Serbia and Montenegro, had entered upon what might be called a normal phase, as the solution depended upon the issue of the war, and that could only be favourable to the Turkish Army. But the Bulgarian question possessed very grave dangers for the Empire.

As soon as I returned to Constantinople, I did my best to attract the attention of the Ministers to the matter, and recommended that prompt and efficacious measures should be taken.

As a matter of fact, the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina was only raised by Russia in order to distract the attention of Austria-Hungary and the rest of Europe, and open a field of action in Bulgaria, where all the Russian intrigues were concentrated. Mahmoud Nedim Pasha was the real fomenter of this Bulgarian imbroglio, which Ignatieff had been pushing for years with the feeling of certainty that by this means the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire would be attained. Whether the Grand Vizier was actuated by perfidy or by stupidity, I am not sure, but the fact is that without him Ignatieff would never have succeeded in attaining his political ends.

In the first place, all the Bulgarian country south of the Balkans was denuded of the contingents of the regular army. The requests of the local authorities that troops might be sent to the different localities of the vilayet Adrianople were unheeded. Mahmoud Nedim even discharged several of the governors who persisted in pointing out the gravity of the situation and the need for the presence of regular troops. He gave explicit orders that the Bulgarians should be allowed to carry arms, saying it would be unjust to deprive these poor people of the means of defending themselves against their stronger and more numerous Mussulman cohabitants.

All was therefore methodically prepared. The day arranged for beforehand, May 5th, fête of St. George, which is a festival throughout the East, the Bulgarian rising began, the centres of the insurrection being seven villages, Batak, Perustitcha, Bratchkovo, Avretalan, and others. *Agents provocateurs*, disguised as *softas*, had been through the principal Mussulman centres, and had warned the Turks of the approach of the Muscovites and the coming attacks of the Giaours, all with a view to the provoking of massacres. These facts, followed by a number of murders among the employés of the local authorities and other inoffensive persons, alarmed the Mussulman public, and threw the governors of the country into consternation, as they found themselves deprived of all legal means of repression. A levée *en masse* of the Mussulmans was at once proclaimed, and the suppression of the revolt began with all the horrors of civil war, in which fanaticism and the thirst for reprisals played a terrible rôle. Several thousands of Bulgarians were massacred, and several dozen villages were burned. Such was the price of putting down the Bulgarian revolt.

It is unfortunate that the Ministers who succeeded Mahmoud Nedim were satisfied with putting down the insurrection without thought of the consequences of so terrible a repression.

Eddib Effendi, President of the Cour des Comptes, who had lived in Bulgaria for a long time during the government of Midhat Pasha, was sent to make an inquiry on the spot, but his report was based simply upon official information which he picked up in the different centres he visited.

During the calm of desolation that followed this carnage, Macgahan, the correspondent of the *Daily News*, visited the country, and his attention having been drawn while at Pazarjik Peshteré by human members being carried away by the brook, he followed this stream as far as Batak, where he was confronted by the horrible spectacle which he reported immediately by cable to his paper. This, of course, provoked a great popular indignation in England, where Mr. Gladstone started his famous campaign against the Ottoman Government. Sir A. Baring, Secretary of the

British Embassy at Constantinople, and Mr. Schuyler, of the American Embassy, were sent to make an inquiry. Other investigations were made by Black Bey, former Minister at Washington, and by Hagiovantchi Effendi, Councillor of State (a Bulgarian).

The Sublime Porte instructed me to examine the various *dossiers* and draw up a report showing the causes and effects of this terrible business. Secretaries from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were placed at my disposal for the purpose.

The examination of these various reports and sources of evidence was to convince me that after the suppression of the revolt, the local authorities had drifted into a most criminal state of indifference. In a bag containing thousands of individual reports on the massacres, I only found one small piece of paper containing two brief lines about the quashing of the revolt at Batak. As to the reports of the two last envoyés of the Porte, which I read with Odian Effendi and my colleague Serkiss Effendi, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was impossible with such documents to arrive at any truth as to the facts, which looked to me as if they were likely to let loose an absolute tempest on the Empire.

In the presence of Sir Alfred Sandison, first dragoman of the British Embassy, I had a heated conversation with Midhat Pasha, on whom I urged the absolute necessity of a serious inquiry. Midhat Pasha went immediately to the Grand Vizier. He returned in a few minutes, and informed Sir Alfred and myself of the decision that had been taken to send a commission of inquiry to the scene of the massacres. The next day an Imperial order was issued constituting a commission under the presidency of Saadullah Bey, ex-Secretary of the Sultan Murad, and consisting of three Mussulman dignitaries, of whom I was one, and three Christians. The task of the commission was to assign responsibilities, to punish the guilty, and repair the material damage by settling the peasants of the devastated villages before the bad season should arrive.

Two days later we left for Philippopolis, where we arrived on the second day. The reception we met with from the population of Philippopolis was a rather freezing one. They looked upon our inquiry as the prelude to a humiliating reprimand for the Mussulmans. A few days later the proprietor of the big house which had been placed at our disposal—a certain Ismail Bey—fearing public anger, put us literally out into the street. We had some difficulty in finding a building large enough and suitable to house all the staff of the commission.

Having made the necessary arrangements for the rebuilding of the burnt villages and houses, we left for visits to the different centres of the rising and its suppression. We began with Batak, which it took us three days to reach. On our arrival we were received by several hundred women and young girls lamenting and sobbing and carrying in their arms, one the head of a woman, another the arm or leg of a child that had been massacred. The church was filled with bodies in an advanced state of decomposition, and we could not approach it for the odour. I never saw or imagined anything so horrible. and the thought of this nightmare affects me even to-day. The little hamlet of Batak, consisting of six hundred houses and several hundred mechanical sawmills, was in ruins.

We reprimanded the governor of the district on which Batak depended for having left these bodies unburied for months, and ordered him to have them interred at once and to disinfect the church. This was done without delay.

On our return to Philippopolis, Baring joined us in the capacity of English commissioner, and, accompanied by him, a few days later we went through the other part of the stricken district in the region of Kalofer and Derbent Ouklissura. Getting back once more to Philippopolis, we settled down to our task, which, inasmuch as we had to render justice at the same time as we were trying to carry on a work of reconciliation, was at once judicial and administrative.

I, personally, had not a few difficulties with Sir A. Baring. Although his mission was only to see that the commission was working properly, he was often constrained to take part in the discussions—which we all considered perfectly natural. Baring, being the first among the foreigners, and having himself witnessed the horrible results of these massacres, and drawn up a report based upon the sad impression he had brought away with him, considered himself obliged to defend his own assertions every time the inquiry seemed to be tending towards weakening or modifying them. So his only desire was to find his own contentions proved and his recommendations supported. We, however, who saw above and behind all the abyss into which the Empire was being carried through these terrible events, considered it a patriotic duty to find out at any cost the primordial causes; and in view of the impossibility of effacing that which was ineffaceable, to try at any rate to attenuate the effects.

Baring on several occasions made reports to the British Embassy criticising me. His chief, Sir H. Elliot, who knew me well and appreciated the motives of my acts, advised him to try and cultivate harmony and mutual understanding.

The season was advancing without the burnt villages having been reconstructed. Lord Salisbury, who was at Constantinople, complained of this to the Sublime Porte, who drew the attention of the Commission to the fact. As a matter of fact, Saadullah Bey, our president, who was a man of great intelligence and high value, but was not accustomed to practical affairs, was becoming immersed in questions of detail and routine. At the request of the Sublime Porte, I took charge of this practical side of the affair, and in twenty days' time the seventy villages were in a condition to receive their unfortunate inhabitants, who had scattered all over the locality. Two highly capable men at Philippopolis, Hadji Hamid and Noury Effendi, were given the task of building the houses, the necessary credits being placed at their disposal. The confidence shown in the Mussulman villagers, and the recommendation urged on them to show their zeal and fraternal goodwill by helping to prepare and transport the materials necessary for the rebuilding of the villages of their Christian compatriots, had not a little to do with our arriving so speedily at the desired result.

So much having been accomplished, I was recalled by the Grand Vizier to Constantinople to give explanations to Lord Salisbury and the Embassy concerning the affairs of the Commission, and at the same time to present the report on the Bulgarian rising and its suppression. At the capital I was presented to the Marquess of Salisbury, who handed over to Mr. Philip Currie, attached to his mission, the task of taking notes of my explanation. Thus I had the advantage of starting relations with Sir Philip Currie (as he afterwards became) which lasted until his death. My report, with all the documents in support of it, after being submitted to the Council of Ministers, was translated and despatched to Odian Effendi, who was then in London, in order to be submitted to the British Government.

In this report I tried to bring out first the fact of an insurrection which had been prepared long beforehand, and then the horrors of the reprisals, which had assumed unjustifiable proportions, under the guise of repression. The proof of the responsibility of the Government of this time, which by its criminal neglect was the cause of so much unhappiness both for the people and the Empire, was also clearly set forth, as was furthermore the fact that all their misdeeds had been already branded by public opinion, which had abolished the whole régime, including the Sovereign himself. The number of the victims of the outrages, which had been exaggerated to more than 50,000 in different quarters, was put at its true figure—some 6,000 odd.

Some days before my arrival at Constantinople, Sir Henry Elliot had had an audience of the Sultan, in which he told him of the Queen's desire that those guilty of the massacres should be punished. A list of the accused persons was submitted. At the head of them was Shefket Pasha, who had been sent after the troubles to Slivono as commander of the hastily mobilised troops. At the same time the good services rendered on the occasion by several public functionaries were signalised, and the first mentioned of these was Hyder Pasha, the governor of Slivono. A special commission was constituted, of which I was appointed president, to inquire into these cases. Among the members was a general of division, Djemal Pasha, and a member of the Council of State, Abro Effendi, an Armenian.

I had several interviews with Sir Henry Elliot as to the choice of the English commissioner who should accompany me to Bulgaria on the new commission. I would not have Sir A. Baring, for reasons which I have indicated above, and at the Embassy there were no secretaries free at the moment, as the International Conference was taking up all their time. Finally we settled upon Mr. Read, British consul at Rustchuk. In the last interview I had with Sir Henry we discussed Hyder Pasha. Hyder, who was a creature of Akif Pasha, Governor-General of Adrianople, and who was also very intimate with Shefket Pasha, had done his best to profit by the feeling then ruling in Europe, and especially in England, for his own ends, his idea being that he could make Baring and the other foreigners who had visited the stricken districts believe that he had tried to prevent what had happened, and that the severe measures of Akif Pasha and Shefket Pasha were the real cause. It was in this way that he had got himself placed on the list of those who had rendered valuable services, which was submitted to the British Sovereign.

I explained all this to the Ambassador, adding that no action would be taken against Hyder Pasha since he enjoyed such distinguished patronage, but that the inquiry would show the double rôle he had played, and that the Ambassador would be able to judge of his merits. Sir Henry Elliot very kindly said that if he were in my place he would have acted with the same devotion as I had done in this Bulgarian trouble, but that in the interests of the Empire he advised me to use a great deal of reserve and caution so as not to provoke a change of Government in England, which might bring Mr. Gladstone back to power!

On leaving Constantinople I first went to Philippopolis, where all my colleagues of the Commission, as well as Sir A. Baring, came to the station to meet me. Baring, who had received fresh recommendations from the Ambassador, was very amiable to me, but unfortunately not many hours had passed before a fresh incident arose between us. The question was as to the procedure of the trial that was about to be opened against the accused persons, Ahmeda of Dospat, Ali Beylouan, Ameda and Toussoum Bey. I was in favour of adopting the procedure in general use, according a defender to each of the accused, and giving the right to examine the witnesses publicly. Baring, in curious contradiction to the love of fair play which usually characterises the English, opposed this plan, alleging that the witnesses would be afraid of giving their testimony in public. In face of my reasoning, the President, who had accepted Baring's views during my absence, came round to my opinion, and Baring angrily declared that in spite of his desire to yield to the advice of his chief, he found it impossible to agree with me.

I quitted Philippopolis the next day for Slivono, and at Tirnovo Selemli, *en route,* Mr. Read and my two colleagues on the work of the other Commission joined me. At Slivono we found the governor Hyder Pasha ill, or feigning to be ill. As I told him he must absolutely accompany us on the trip we were making to Boyajyck, one of the principal villages in the Sanjak of Slivono, the inhabitants of which were attacked and their houses burned, and where our chief inquiry was to be held, and to Jamboli, he rose the next day, and two days later we left for these two places.

The village of Boyajyck contained no place habitable for us except some stables, and one or two barns contiguous to the farm of a Dr. Hykimian. Besides the governor, I had brought with me on this journey the Bulgarian Archbishop; I made him always precede us in the villages we visited in order to instruct the peasants concerning our mission and inspire them with confidence. Shefket was also placed at the disposal of the Commission to explain his own acts on the spot.

The inquiry only lasted a few days, but they were like years in my life. I never found myself in such unpleasant surroundings. We had to accept the accommodation which the place afforded, and we were almost sitting in the mud, while we were in the midst of draughts which alone would have rendered our work terribly irksome. At every moment the English commissioner became irritated for some reason or another, and threatened to go off in a huff. The inquiry was, however, at last concluded without any other serious incident. Two small occurrences might have been annoying, but luckily they had no sequel. A Bulgarian of the village who was formerly in the service of a Turk suddenly burst in upon us one day and asked me to tell the "Karabash" ("Black Head"), as he called the Archbishop, to administer the oath that he would tell the truth. He then testified that the Bulgarians had risen in revolt with the intention of massacring all the Turks, and a number of other things of the same character. His evidence was inscribed and signed by himself, and countersigned by those present.

The next day Mr. Read entered the " council chamber " in a fury, leading by the hand this same individual, who had contradicted all he had said the previous evening. Our duty was manifestly to prosecute this light-tongued gentleman for perjury and false testimony, but to avoid gossip we decided simply to consider his oath and testimony as null and void and think no more of the matter. Fortunately Mr. Read raised no difficulty with regard to this arrangement.

The second incident arose out of a remark made by my colleague, General Djemal Pasha, regarding the young man who accompanied Mr. Read in the capacity of interpreter. Djemal Pasha maintained that as this young man was a Bulgarian, and was mixed up in the national uprising, he ought not to be present at the sittings. Mr. Read rose in great anger, and was going out. I had great trouble to retain him, assuring him that we must have confidence in the man in whom the representative of the British Government had confidence. In this way this incident also terminated.

The inquiry on the spot and the examination of witnesses being completed, there remained only the examination of Shefket Pasha to be gone into. So we proceeded to Jamboli, the chief town of the district, for the conclusion of the inquiry, and to look into other cases with which the Commission had to deal. A small difficulty presented itself in the case of Shefket Pasha. Mr. Read insisted that he should not wear his sword in the Commission ; but as he was a general on active service, and only accompanied us in order to give explanations that would help in the work of the inquiry, we could not ask him to submit to any humiliating conditions. Still, in order to cut short arguments, I promised Mr. Read that I would relieve the Pasha of his sword when he was before the Commission. When Shefket Pasha had sat down, therefore, I told my servant to take the Pasha's sword. According to Oriental etiquette, this is an act of politeness paid to a superior officer, so Mr. Read was satisfied and the Pasha was complimented.

It was while we were at Jamboli that we received the news first of the nomination of Midhat Pasha as Grand Vizier, and then of the promulgation of the Ottoman Constitution. These two happy events were celebrated by the population with great enthusiasm.

Just as I was leaving Jamboli, Hyder Pasha handed me a sealed letter addressed to me, with the request that I should not open it until I arrived at Constantinople. I understood at once that it contained his resignation of his post, which he considered had become untenable, as I had suggested to Sir H. Elliot that it was. At Philippopolis I found my friend Saadullah Bey in bed with a bad attack of hysterics caused by several of the accused having been condemned to death.

The Mussulman part of the population had all revolted against this judgment, which was looked upon as the greatest insult for Islam. On the eve of my departure from this town, all the Mussulman notables met at the house of Hadji Arif Aga, where I was also invited, and after dinner they all joined in begging me to intercede with the Grand Vizier to have the sentence of death commuted. They declared their readiness to sacrifice their goods and their lives for the salvation of the Empire in face of the danger of war which was threatening it.

The promulgation of the Constitution and the inauguration of the new régime aroused a new spirit in the Ottoman public, both Mussulman and Christian. The Bulgarians, even more than the Mussulmans, began to feel confidence in the new order of things, and to look forward to a new happiness for themselves and the country. I had talks with the leading notables of the place, who assured me of their unshakeable devotion to the Liberal Empire ; several of them had accepted posts as governors or deputy-governors in the Bulgarian country. It will be readily understood that, after these spontaneous manifestations of confidence, it was with considerable joy and pride that I left this beautiful country to return to Constantinople.

I made a short stay at Adrianople in order to help to bring about a similar feeling among the population there. Nor were my efforts fruitless. The next day the whole population of Adrianople, with the Mufti and the other Ulemas, the Greek and Bulgarian Archbishops, the head of the Armenian Church, and the Jewish Rabbi, with banners unfurled, went in great pomp to the Government Palace, and requested the Governor-General, Mustapha Hassim Pasha, to come down into the court, where they declared that all, without distinction of race or religion, were united for the defence of the Empire and its independence, and ready to make any sacrifices demanded of them. They begged the Governor to transmit these sentiments to the Sultan, with £T12,000, which they had collected on the spot, and the enrolment of a battalion composed of all the young men from all sections of the population. On the evening of this notable day the Governor-General told me about it with tears of emotion still filling his eyes.

On the evening of my arrival at Constantinople I had a conversation with the Grand Vizier in the presence of Safed Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and of Edhem Pasha, Ambassador at Berlin, and second delegate to the Conference of Constantinople. Giving Midhat Pasha an account of my mission, I also handed him the letter of Hyder Pasha, which he instructed me to hand on to the Grand Referendary,[1] with instructions to find a successor for the government of Slivono. He told me also to go to Sir H. Elliot the next day, to explain to him the resignation of Hyder, and give him to understand that the acceptance of the resignation implied no disgrace, since another post had been reserved for him.

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[1] The Grand Referendary's office takes charge of all matters to be submitted to the Sultan and puts them into proper form.

When I told Midhat Pasha of the desires and supplication of the Turkish population of Philippopolis with regard to the carrying out of the judgment of the Commission on the accused men, the Grand Vizier, who quite understood the importance of the fact, despite the objections of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, sent a telegram to Odian Effendi in London, telling him to explain to the Prime Minister (Disraeli) and Lord Derby the political necessity of reducing the capital sentence. Odian Effendi, who was in London in the capacity of special and confidential envoy of the Porte to the Cabinet of St. James, carried out his mission with great tact, asking the Ministers to fall in with the views of Midhat Pasha as a personal favour to him, as at such a critical moment he needed to preserve all his influence over the Mussulman population so as to be able to carry out the reforms intended by the new régime.

Now that the Constitution was a *fait accompli*, Midhat Pasha, thus the first Constitutional Grand Vizier, seemed to be in enjoyment of the absolute confidence of his sovereign and to be master of the situation in Turkey. But, unfortunately, this did not last long. Difficulties soon arose in the political sphere, both in the interior and outside of Turkey, and his position speedily became more and more precarious.

The Conference, which had assembled at Constantinople on the proposal of the British Government, who had drawn up the programme, insisted upon the demands of the Russian Government with regard to autonomy for Bulgaria and Bosnia and Herzegovina being accepted. While Midhat Pasha was struggling against these difficulties, the Sultan, guided and helped by Said Bey, his first secretary, and by others attached to his person, did his best to destroy his Grand Vizier's work of reform and preservation of the Empire. First he tried to bring disunion among the Ministers and political men who had taken an active part in the changes of the two reigns. He carried on continual negotiations with General Ignatieff and Count Zichy, the Ambassadors of Russia and Austria-Hungary respectively, through his secret agents, to obtain the support of these two Powers, the upholders of the autocratic principle, for his own person and throne. In exchange he promised to accept the undertaking come to between the two Emperors at Reichstadt.

In a conversation the Sultan had with Lord Salisbury, he gave the first delegate of Queen Victoria to understand that if it were not for the opposition of the Grand Vizier, he would be disposed to accept the proposals of the Conference. So, too, the heads of the two political parties, the Young Turks and the Old Turks, were encouraged in their various views with the sole object of creating opposition for Midhat Pasha. On the one hand, the so-called Liberals, encouraged by promises from the Palace, became more and more insistent for the acceptance of their political views; on the other hand, the heads of the fanatical party created open opposition by poisoning public opinion against the régime inaugurated by Midhat Pasha.

Zia Pasha and Kemal Bey, the poet, were two of the most militant and dangerous men of this time. One evening, at the house of Midhat Pasha, I took Kemal Bey aside, and tried to persuade him to be moderate in his acts, which were likely greatly to harm Midhat Pasha's position. But my efforts were wasted. He thought he himself was the master of the situation, and he told me that the next day he was going to the Sultan, to explain to His Majesty what the people, of whom he claimed to be the accredited spokesman, wanted of the new régime. I told Midhat Pasha of our conversation and of my views on the matter. Thereupon the Grand Vizier sent me at once to see the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and to get him to ask the approval of the Persian Government to the nomination of Kemal Bey as ambassador at Teheran. This appointment took place, while Zia Bey was appointed Governor-General of Syria.

Each time I was at Constantinople during this period Midhat Pasha made me take part in the discussions of the Commission which was drawing up the Charter of the new Ottoman Constitution, over which he himself presided. At the last sitting the question of trial by jury was discussed. The Liberal Party strongly advocated its adoption, and were supported by Djevdat Pasha, who passed for an authority on Mussulman jurisprudence, and it was almost adopted under the name of the *Oudool.* I, however, explained to them that the *Oudool* of the Cheriff (or the Mussulman law) in no way resembled the jury system, the *Oudool* being only an expert on his oath.

As regarded the principle of the jury, I maintained that it was totally unsuited to the people of Turkey, where it was necessary, first of all, to make the law felt and accustom the population to respect it. The jury system was suited to a country whose population were lovers of order, and who lived in awe and respect of the law. To establish the jury system in Turkey, where the mere idea of law had not yet taken root, would mean that crime would go unpunished. The first thing to be done was to take measures to prevent specific crimes in the various parts of the country, and especially to put down the different forms of crime that were rife in the various localities. In Albania, for instance, one would never have found a jury to condemn for murder in the case of a vendetta. Similarly, an Arab jury would never condemn a person accused of the "Razzia," or raids upon neighbours' belongings, just as Turkish juries would look with indulgence on abductions of young women and girls. One had an example in Greece, where the jury system had been tried, and where it was notorious that persons accused of brigandage were invariably acquitted. The system of trial by one's peers in the countries where it was established acted in a way to mitigate the rigours of the law, but to relax those rigours in countries where no respect was entertained for the law at all, would mean its practical abolition. My arguments, supported by Midhat Pasha, were found to be so conclusive, that the system of trial by jury was not adopted.

CHAPTER VIII

1877

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE—THE POWERS' DEMANDS REJECTED—DEPARTURE OF THE AMBASSADORS—MIDHAT PASHA'S DIFFICULTIES WITH THE SULTAN—HIS EXILE—LETTERS FROM COLONEL GORDON.

How unfortunate it was that, at a moment when all the forces and all the intelligence of the Ottomans ought to have been united to face the danger that was threatening the Empire from without, the Palace on the one hand and the Liberal Party on the other should have persistently intrigued with the object of paralysing the patriotic work of Midhat Pasha for their own ends! The important Conference of which I have spoken, when the delegates of the Sublime Porte submitted a counter proposition, called upon the latter to accept in its entirety the last formula proposed by the Russian delegate and approved by the other delegates on the question of the autonomy of the three Provinces. As it was impossible as yet to convene the Chamber, the Porte decided to submit this proposal to a general assembly, which was to consist of the dignitaries and representatives of all classes of the population. January 17th, 1877, was fixed for the meeting of this great council, to consist of 237 persons.

The evening before the date appointed, Midhat Pasha summoned me, and I found him in the act of dictating to the Grand Referendary the declaration which he was to read at this general council. He passed me the sheets of this declaration as they were written, so that I could read them myself, and at the end he asked for my opinion. I could but approve. After having sketched the history of all the events since the insurrection of Bosnia and Herzegovina, he showed clearly and firmly the difficulties which would face the Empire in case the proposals of Europe, which had been placed before her with unanimity, were rejected, and the consequences that might ensue. After dinner the Grand Vizier, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I were discussing the situation, when a private letter from Lord Salisbury, brought by a special messenger, was handed to Midhat Pasha. In this letter Lord Salisbury gave his view of the gravity of the situation and the danger which the Empire was running should the proposals of Europe be rejected. He added that although the General Council would discuss the question, its decision would really depend on the opinion and the inspiration of His Highness, who was thus assuming a tremendous responsibility before his country and before history. It was an appeal to the Grand Vizier's patriotism, friendly in form, but almost threatening in its intention.

The reply was drawn up at once, and sent to Lord Salisbury by the same messenger. Midhat Pasha gave the British representative to understand that he thoroughly grasped both the danger which threatened the Empire and the responsibility resting on himself personally, but that he was determined to do his best to save the country without thought of the precipice ahead in case of his failure. His hope was based on the faith Europe would have accorded him, and especially on the support he would have from the Government and public opinion in England. I must say that Lord Salisbury, during this stay of his in Constantinople, had always borne himself towards the Ottoman dignitaries, and especially towards Midhat Pasha, with a certain hauteur and coldness which did not impress us very favourably.

Midhat Pasha's own views, expressed to us after tha despatch of this letter, are worth recording here. Turkey, he said, was in need of a radical reform of her provincial administration. The leading advocate of these reforms was the Grand Vizier himself, and the Constitution freshly promulgated was the guarantee for their fulfilment. We knew that the Cabinet of St. James was only anxious for the realisation of these schemes, and had full confidence in the sincerity and capacity of Midhat. After the dissolution of the Conference, the very programme which we all desired would be carried out in its entirety without loss of time, but without outside interference. On this point Midhat Pasha's intention was formal and complete.

The Grand Vizier discussed the question of finding four persons capable of occupying the posts of commissaries for Bulgaria, Bosnia, and Herzegovina, and Governor-General of the two Provinces. We passed in review the persons suited to these posts, and my departmental chief, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was kind enough to say, pointing to myself, "One of the four is before Your Highness now."

The Council assembled the next day under the presidency of Midhat Pasha. The first speaker was Roushdy Pasha, ex-Grand Vizier, who said the demand put forward by the Powers meant the practical abandonment of Turkey's independence, and a country that consented to give up its independence was dead. He should vote for the rejection of the proposal. Turks, Armenians, and others present made very patriotic speeches, especially the Vicar of the Armenian Patriarchate, Monsignor Infiegian, who said that if the last hour of the Empire had struck, then all Ottomans, whatever their race or religion, would prefer to be buried under the ruins of the splendid edifice that the Empire once was, than barter away her birthright. This speech created a very great impression.

Midhat Pasha repeated his fears as to the difficulties and dangers that would certainly follow the rejection of the proposals, and asked his hearers to reflect well and weigh the consequences of the vote they were about to record.

Then almost unanimously the rejection of the proposals was voted. Only Prince Halim Pasha, of Egypt, and one or two others voted for their adoption.

The decision of the Council was communicated to the Ambassadors by Safed Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate to the Conference.

The Conference was thereupon dissolved. The special delegates, as well as the Ambassadors, all left the capital, after confiding the direction of the various embassies to the respective chargés d'affaires.

Sir Henry Elliot, who was very popular in Constantinople, and who left with the rest, was made the object of a special address from the Turks and the Christians. This address recorded their gratitude for the kindliness shown by him to all parties during the long period that he had represented Great Britain at the Porte, and especially for the interest he had shown in the Empire and its people during the deliberations of the Conference. The address was presented to him by a deputation which went on board the boat just before it left.

Everyone now knew what were the sentiments of the Powers that had been represented at the Conference. We were well aware of the motive for Ignatieff's insistence, as also the reasons why Austria-Hungary seemed not to take Midhat Pasha's work seriously. What astonished and perplexed public opinion in Turkey and in several Western countries was the attitude of Great Britain. There were Turks who entertained doubts as to the sincerity of English policy concerning Turkey, and these attributed Lord Salisbury's compliance with the views of his Russian colleague to duplicity. So did some others in other countries.

The representatives of the great Powers having left, Midhat Pasha set himself to the task of carrying out all the reforms considered indispensable, and of taking measures necessary to establish a direct entente with Serbia. Pertev Effendi, a former official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and an Armenian, was sent on a confidential mission to Belgrade, and Prince Milan, with whom he put himself in direct communication, hastened to accept the views and wishes of Midhat Pasha for the resumption of his relations of submission and fidelity towards the Suzerain Court. Milan seemed to be so disappointed with Russia that he swore to Pertev Effendi that he would never again seek to have relations with the Tsar's Government.

In spite of these successes, the attitude of the Sultan and the Court towards Midhat Pasha became more and more antagonistic, and the intrigues around him increased in virulence.

Midhat Pasha was in the habit of receiving after dinner. Conversation on different questions would be continued until a late hour of the night, and when every one had left, he kept me back in order to discuss questions of the day and to read different documents which particularly interested him. One evening he made me read two letters which he had received from some political men in England. In one of them he was advised to get into direct relationship with Prince Bismarck, and to try to interest the Chancellor in the new political situation in Turkey. With this end in view, there was question of an Ambassador for Berlin, and Midhat Pasha mentioned the ex-Ambassador at Teheran, Youssouf Riza Pasha. I was disagreeably surprised by this selection, but did not say anything. The other English letter told the Grand Vizier it was advisable for the Empire to get into touch politically with the Empires of the Extreme East, and that he ought to send an extraordinary mission, headed by a person of importance politically. In the view of the writer of this letter, that person ought to be Ahmed Vefik Effendi. As this latter had not visited Midhat Pasha since the establishment of the new Constitution, his Highness, interested in the suggestion, asked me to go and see Ahmed Vefik on the morrow, to show him the letter, and ask for his opinion.

I accordingly went next day to see Ahmed Vefik at his home at Roumelissa (on the Bosphorus). He received me, according to his usual custom, in his Turkish dressing-gown and red slippers. In spite of its originality, he was impressed by the Grand Vizier's action. He agreed with the views of the writer of the letter, but objected that, as regarded himself, his age unfitted him for a mission of the kind, which ought to be filled by a younger and more active man. I, of course, reported this conversation to Midhat Pasha, as also the promise of Ahmed Vefik Effendi to go and see him very shortly. The promised visit, however, never took place.

One morning when I was with Midhat Pasha, he told me of his decision to appoint me Under-Secretary of State for the Grand Vizierate, adding that the Sultan could have no further reason to object to such an appointment. This remark made me go next morning to see Saïd Bey, First Secretary of the Sultan, and ask him why the Sultan had so far raised objections to my appointment. Saïd Bey replied that the Sultan had only asked that my appointment should be put off until after the Conference, and that now there was no longer any objection.

He took the opportunity, however, to tell me His Majesty was annoyed at the acts and demeanour of Midhat Pasha, which seemed to him to be incompatible with the duties of a Grand Vizier. I did my best to defend my chief. The next day the Sultan, on his own initiative, nominated the ex-Grand Vizier, Roushdy Pasha, Minister without Portfolio, and the ex-Minister of Finance, Galib Bey, Senator. Midhat Pasha refused bluntly to carry out these orders, on the plea that the number and the attributes of the Ministers being prescribed by the Constitution, he, as the first Constitutional Grand Vizier, could not lend himself to an act which was contrary to this charter. Nevertheless, he said he would be ready to propose his predecessor as First Senator, and, if he would not take this post, he was ready even to give up to him the position of Grand Vizier, and accept instead his post of Senator of the Empire. As to Galib Bey, who had been dismissed from the Ministry of Finance for irregularity in the use of State funds, and was liable to be the object of a judicial inquiry, he did not consider that he was worthy of the post of Senator. Such were among the difficulties that made themselves felt between the Sultan and his Grand Vizier.

Midhat Pasha, as I have said, was resolved to carry out in its integrity the programme that had been recommended by Europe, but without the interference of Europe. So he prepared the organisation of Bulgaria and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and also began to take measures to give satisfaction to the other ethnical elements of the Empire. In accordance with these ideas, a large vilayet of Albania was created under the name of Kossovo, and Kiamil Pasha (afterwards Grand Vizier), then Deputy-Governor of Aleppo, was proposed as Governor-General. Sava Pasha, a Greek by origin, was appointed Governor-General of the Isles of the Archipelago, the population of which was almost entirely Greek. The Sultan opposed the appointment of Kiamil Pasha, and so a fresh conflict broke out between him and his chief Minister.

In fact, the Grand Vizier's position became more and more difficult. While these events were taking place, alarming rumours were spread about plots or subversive schemes, which were all pure inventions, intended to discredit the administration of Midhat Pasha.

One of the chiefs of the Young Turks was Ali Suavy—the same who was killed during his plot to reinstate the ex-Sultan Murad, as mentioned in a previous chapter—who in the time of Aali Pasha took refuge in London, and then settled in Paris, where he published a newspaper in Turkish called "Riet" ("Liberty"). On the accession of Murad he was permitted to return to Constantinople. He reached the capital after Abd-ul-Hamid had mounted the throne, and he went to the Sultan and talked to him in a very strange way, in total opposition to the principles which he had for years advocated in his organ, reminding the Sultan of the splendours of his ancestors, and advising him to preserve to himself the absolute power, thanks to which so vast an Empire had been built up. The Sultan, delighted with such talk, appointed him director of the grammar school at Galata, where he took up his residence with his English wife. Ali Suavy continued openly to oppose Midhat Pasha and his policy. With this end in view he tried to form a political party, among those who aided him being Hallil Shereef Pasha, Minister of Justice, who had had relations with Ali Suavy since the time when Prince Fazil Pasha, of Egypt (Hallil's father-in-law), had supported Suavy by means of regular subventions. This Hallil Shereef Pasha, at the instigation of Suavy, asked for a private audience of the Sultan in order to set before His Majesty the political aims of his friend, but when he got into the presence of the sovereign, he found himself afflicted with a paralysis of the tongue. He was forced to retire without having been able to say a word. Midhat Pasha, when he heard the story, could not help remarking, " May all who dare to try and talk against the Constitution find themselves similarly tongue-tied."

One day, when the Ministerial Council was sitting, Mahmoud Damat Pasha, Marshal of the Court, and Grand Master of Artillery, who was one of the chief leaders of the Palace Opposition to Midhat Pasha, called me over and took me aside in the bureau of the Grand Vizier, in that Minister's absence, and asked me to give him details about the conversation I had had some time previously with the famous poet, Kemal Bey, and which, according to Mahmoud Pasha, Midhat Pasha had repeated to the Sultan. I avoided giving a direct reply, saying it was a conversation without any importance, the substance of which even I hardly remembered. But Mahmoud Pasha insisted, and even told me that Kemal Bey had declared to me on that occasion that he was working with the object of getting one of the family of the Grand Cherif, as descendant of the Prophet, proclaimed President of an Ottoman Republic in place of the Sultan. Disgusted as I was with such malevolent intrigue, I told him it was the first time I had ever heard such a suggestion from the mouth of a Turk. He seemed to be extremely excited against Kemal, and so I tried to calm him by telling him that such rumours at a time when the country had need of union and concord could only do harm.

But nothing would stop the venomous attacks on Midhat Pasha, and it was even stated that he had declared at his own table that in a short while the Sultan himself would be forced to kiss his hand!

There ensued, however, a period of calm, and Midhat Pasha was able to resume more or less normal relations with the sovereign. In one interview the Sultan told him of his desire to send presents to the Emperor of Austria, and asked him to designate someone who could be sent on such a mission, and who would also be entrusted with confidential communications for the Emperor. The Sultan wished me to be entrusted with this mission, to which the Grand Vizier agreed. Midhat Pasha told me of this wish of the Sultan's, and bade me prepare for the journey and repair to the Palace in order to take verbal instructions from His Majesty. I could not conceal my astonishment or my fear of the disagreeable consequences of such a mission. I assured Midhat Pasha that, at a time when the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador had left the capital with other representatives of the Powers, it would be impossible for the Emperor to receive presents or a special envoy from the Sultan. His Highness agreed with this view of the matter, and submitted my remarks to the Sultan, who, however, insisted. On returning the second time from the Palace, Midhat Pasha told me I should have to go.

I did not go, however. The remarkable events that followed prevented the carrying out of the mission. Much later, Suleyman Bey was sent on this mission, but, as I had foreseen, neither he nor the presents were received by the Emperor. And, what was really curious, was that Suleyman Bey, who was the depositary of the Sultan's confidential communications to the Austro-Hungarian Sovereign, was not allowed to return to Constantinople, but was appointed Minister at Bucharest, where he died, without ever having returned to the capital.

This resumption of relations between Midhat Pasha and the Palace did not last long. Fresh difficulties arose, and the Grand Vizier retired to his own house and went no more to the Porte. At the next Council of Ministers after this, held as usual on a Sunday, Midhat Pasha was not present. In the evening the Ministers of War and of Finance went to his house, while the Minister for Foreign Affairs went to the Palace to try and bring about a reconciliation. The two former Ministers prolonged their visit until a late hour of the night in the hope of receiving a word from the Palace. A short while after their departure the Grand Vizier received a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs announcing that everything had been arranged, and that the Sultan had given him orders to go back the next morning to the Palace with Midhat Pasha himself. He told me the news immediately, and we were very pleased at what looked like a satisfactory termination of the trouble.

The next morning, thinking that Midhat Pasha would be at the Palace, I remained at home. But very soon one of the Grand Vizier's servants came to ask me to go immediately to his house, as something had happened to him. I guessed at once what had happened. In order to calm my family, I called my mother and my wife, explained to them what had happened to Midhat Pasha, and recommended them to keep calm should a similar fate overtake me. I was very pleased when my mother, like the true

Albanian she was, quietly remarked, "That is nothing. All things can happen to men," and added that she would not be uneasy.

I then went to Midhat Pasha's house, which was now deserted by his friends and courtiers. His son-in-law, at his wit's end, was doing his best to get ready some of the exiled Minister's things, which were to be sent to him on board the boat that was to take him away from the Empire for which he had done so much. The house, which was on the heights overlooking the sea, was surrounded by a battalion of soldiers.

I now learned what had occurred. The first aide-de-camp of the Sultan had come to invite Midhat Pasha to the Palace. On his arrival there he was conducted to the annexe assigned to the Ministry of the Civil List. He was received by the commander of the Military Household, Said Pasha, who told him that by Imperial order he was to leave the capital and Turkish territory at once, embarking on board one of the Sultan's yachts, which was already under steam. The sum of £T500 was handed to him for his travelling expenses.

On my return home I was visited by all my friends, and by many who had simply been attracted by the ceremony of the installation of the new Grand Vizier.

We sent Mr. Mayers, the former British consul, on board the yacht to see Midhat Pasha and to advise him, as a matter of precaution, to quit the vessel at the first port abroad which she touched at. As a matter of fact, the exiled Grand Vizier went to Brindisi, where he left the yacht, and from there proceeded to Naples, whence he wrote me a long letter. Among other things, he told me he had procured a copy of *Plutarch's Lives*, which I had always advised him to read, and he complained of an Italian dentist, who, because he had not extracted a tooth, had extracted £T150 from his pocket!

This exile caused a profound and painful impression, and the Ministers, who were at once called to the Palace, gave vent to their opinions in no measured terms. The Minister for Foreign Affairs bitterly reproached the Sultan, declaring that Midhat's exile was a great wrong done to the Empire, since he was the only one who could bring "that corpse" back to life, and he ought to have been kept until that was done. Even Edhem Pasha, the successor of Midhat, striking his knees, exclaimed repeatedly, "What a calamity! What a calamity!" Abdul Hamid's banker, Georges Zarifi, was even more violent in his remarks to the Sultan himself.

The ceremony of the installation of the new Grand Vizier and the reading of the *Hatt* took place immediately, and I was ordered, in accordance with the usual custom, to go and meet the new Grand Vizier and take part in the procession as a dignitary of the Sublime Porte. Though I was not able to conform to this invitation, I went to the grand hall where the ceremony took place, when Edhem Pasha, the new Grand Vizier, made his official entry, preceded by Said Pasha, the First Secretary and bearer of the Imperial *Hatt*.

While this was going on, the following proclamation was posted in the city:

"Midhat Pasha has inclined towards a life entirely contrary to the spirit of the Constitution. While the Sovereign, abandoning his sovereign rights, abolished the régime of absolutism, certain events have taken place showing that this absolute power given up by the Sultan has been exercised by other hands. Profiting by the situation, a few light-headed[1] individuals have formed malevolent plans against the prerogatives of the Sultan and against public order—plans which have been translated into secret intrigues and even corroborated by acts. Although Midhat Pasha ought by his position to have taken measures to stop the evil, he has, on the contrary, neglected this, and closed his eyes to the fact that the régime which had been discarded was exercised under another form."

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[1] An Arab phrase.

After the new Grand Vizier's installation, and after I had gone back to my own office at the Sublime Porte, the first visit I received was that of M. Onu, first dragoman at the Russian Embassy. This looked to me like a visit of condolence !

Immediately afterwards the postman of the English Post Office brought me a letter from my good friend, Colonel Gordon, sent from Southampton just before his departure to return to Egypt. I give this letter here, as well as another one which I received from Gordon two years previously, while he was in the Soudan. From the former letter it will be seen that Gordon's feelings remained the same as they had been for Turkey, to which he wished to offer his personal services in case of war. The earlier letter contained an indirect appeal to me to go and serve with him in Egypt. I regretted afterwards that I did not do what he wished, but I was still full of hopes that I should be able to render useful services to the Ottoman Empire, to which I was so attached. I was also, unfortunately, unable to follow up his recommendation of his friend, Colonel Nugent, whom he proposed to replace him. The fall of Midhat Pasha and the political changes that ensued were not favourable to adopting such proposals.

The following are the translations of these letters :

I

" SOUTHAMPTON,
"*January 24th*, 1877.

" MY DEAR ISMAIL BEY,

" I was very glad to learn through Mr. Butler-Johnstone that you are well, and that you are so highly placed.

"I am sorry that my word given to the Khedive will prevent my returning to Turkey. I am leaving for Cairo in four days, and will write you from there to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Stamboul. If you want someone to replace me, I would recommend to you one of my friends, Colonel Nugent, C.B., Royal Engineers.

"(1) He is not a man who seeks to amass money, or who would mix up in intrigues (commercial or other).

"(2) He wants to do good, and for that he should be independent.

"(3) He does not want to live in idleness, and he does not like 'antechambering' or aimless ceremonies.

"(4) He is not a man to make difficulties if it is desired that he leave. But I think he will remain if he has no work.[1]

"Good-bye, my dear Ismail Bey. Be sure and tell Midhat Pasha, with my respects, that he should follow the course of action adopted by the Khedive—viz., to engage good foreigners who are not merely looking for money, and who will be a safeguard for the Ottoman Government. I have already told you, you will be a great man, and I still think it. Keep yourself free from adventurers.

"Your devoted friend,
"C. G. GORDON.

"P.S.—The Grand Vizier should ask the British Ambassador to tell him of the services of Colonel Nugent, whom I recommend to you very strongly.

"P.S.—If you ask for Colonel Nugent's services, or if you see a chance, send him a word."

(An envelope addressed to Colonel Nugent at the War Office by Gordon was enclosed in the letter.)

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[1] Gordon's French is not very good, and it is not clear what he means here.

II

"Bedden, 24 miles south
"of Gondohoro,
"*May 5th*, 1875.

"My dear Ismail Bey,

"I received your letter of December 8th yesterday, and I was very sorry to learn that you did not receive the two other letters which I sent you, care of the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the Sublime Porte; it is not my fault. I am very pleased to learn that you are well, and I assure you that I do not forget you. I am sorry you did not accept Tultcha. I wish you were here, but I should be afraid for your health, for the climate is very bad, and, to tell you the truth, we lack many things to make life comfortable. I hope I shall be able to escape a great annoyance in finding the Nile navigable up to the Falls of Mahedi. That will shorten the route by land from Gondohoro to the Lake to eight miles instead of a hundred, and you cannot imagine the difficulty of the journey by land in this country amid hostile tribes. We need time to render them submissive, and we have to go very slowly. At present I am thinking of establishing military posts on the river, and so bringing the tribes to submission by degrees. I have news from Tultcha sometimes. That old commission[1] continues with its wars and disputes. It seems the house of Negropontes at Galatz has been taken as the headquarters, the other house not being good enough. Certainly I think if you were stronger to resist the climate, you would have a great future here, for His Highness[2] has surprising intelligence, and you would find in him a great help for your ideas. But I fear the climate. I have battles with the people in authority; they will not see that I don't want to mix in their business, and that their habits don't concern me in the least. Perhaps later they will understand me. Thanks to His Highness, I am well enough able to resist their attacks.

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[1] Of the Danube.

[2] The Khedive.

"Pardon so short a letter, my dear friend, but I have such a mass of letters to write that I have not the time to write much. Believe me, my dear Ismail Bey, that I shall never forget your kindness and amiability, and that I regret very much that I am not nearer to you.

"Your friend,
"C. G. Gordon."

The next day I sent in my resignation, giving as my reasons that, although I did not desire to judge the act of the Sovereign in the harsh measure he had taken against the Grand Vizier, yet, as I had no cause for changing my views of and appreciation of Midhat Pasha, I preferred to remain outside the public service. My resignation was not accepted, and formal assurances were given me that I had no reason to fear any suspicions on my account.

Kemal Bey and others were directly after the above events arrested and tried. For the trial of Kemal Bey the *juge d'instruction* came to my house to suggest to me on behalf of Mahmoud Damat Pasha and the First Secretary, Said Pasha, what they would like me to say at the trial, which was neither in accordance with the truth nor with my personal dignity. I told the magistrate that Mahmoud Damat had already been told what I knew of the affair, and that I would send my testimony in writing to the Court. When I was summoned to the Court, I repeated my written testimony before Kemal Bey, who was at first somewhat alarmed at my appearance, but quickly recovered, and recognised the entire truth of my statement. This *mise-en-scène* ended in the deportation of Kemal Bey to the island of Chios. Some time later he was pardoned, and appointed governor of the very island to which he had been exiled; thence he was transferred to Mitylene, where he died. His body was taken, in fulfilment of his last wish, to Boulayir, to be interred beside the mausoleum of Suleyman Pasha, son of the Sultan Orhan and first Ottoman conqueror of European territory.

CHAPTER IX

1877—1884

AFTER MIDHAT PASHA'S DEPARTURE—THE RUSSO-TURKISH WAR AND ROUMANIA'S POSITION—THE FIRST PARLIAMENT—AN ILL-TIMED REBELLION—MY SEVEN YEARS OF EXILE—THE TREATY OF SAN STEFANO—MIDHAT PASHA'S RETURN, HIS ARREST AND TRIAL.

EVENTS in the political world after the departure of Midhat Pasha were not of a character calculated to bring calm nor to modify the threatening attitude which Russia had taken up so ostentatiously. The exile of Midhat Pasha if anything increased the general disquiet in Turkey as well as abroad.

It is wrong to suppose that Midhat Pasha desired the war, or tried to provoke it. Not only did he do his best to avert such a catastrophe, but he was in perfect agreement with Great Britain as to the application of the reforms asked for without the slightest reserve and without any delay such as could bring about intervention or remonstrance on the part of the Powers. Great Britain would have done her best, when these reforms were applied, or when she saw they were on the way to be applied, to uphold Turkey and prevent a war let loose by Russia ; and even if Russia should have persisted in her intention to make war, then Europe, and England especially, would have been on the side of Turkey. Count Ignatieff, who was the firebrand of the situation, had undertaken a tour of Europe, beginning with Athens and paying visits to all the Courts in turn. On the other hand, Count Shuvaloff, who was in favour of an entente with Great Britain and the maintenance of peace, was not less active.

The protocol of the London Conference, drawn up and signed by the six Powers, was submitted to the Porte. It gave her a fresh credit to show proof of the sincerity of her undertakings, and was thus now the sole hope of her salvation.

Othér patriots, as well as I myself, were delighted with what seemed to be a solution of the difficulties. But, unhappily, the Sultan and his chief advisers thought differently. They feared public opinion, which in their view would have interpreted the expulsion of Midhat Pasha as a sacrifice made to the enemy abroad. Their thirst for popularity led them to take steps that were terrible for the Empire.

I was extremely astonished to find that my friend, Alexander Pasha Karatheodory, who during the Conference at Constantinople had worried me with requests to persuade Midhat Pasha to accept the demands of Russia, now on this occasion advocated the rejection of the protocol, and undertook himself to draw up the famous Note of the Sublime Porte. I did all I could to try and persuade my chief, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the other Ministers of the necessity of accepting this protocol, which, in my opinion, was not only harmless, but actually salutary. When I read the proposed Note, I told them that in my opinion it would have been ill-placed even in the time of Suleyman the Magnificent.

In spite of everything, the Note was issued, as if some relentless fate had willed it. The war broke out, as was inevitable. For the second time the question of the neutrality of Roumania came up. That country was anxious to preserve her neutrality, and it would have been of immense advantage to the Empire. I exerted all my strength and influence to assure it, but the Porte, having learned of the forced convention between Roumania and Russia, declared war on the former, which seemed to me to be the acme of political error.

The first Chamber of Deputies convoked had meanwhile met at Constantinople. The first matter it had to deal with was naturally the war and preparations for it. Several members of the House, working together with a number of patriots outside it, conceived the idea of constituting a war committee, which should be entrusted exclusively with the organisation and preparation of the war; the members, to the number of ten, should be elected by the Chamber, and the President appointed by the Sultan.

The promotors of this idea wished me to be one of the committee, and came to propose this to me. Touched by such confidence shown in me, I thanked them, but opposed their scheme, as it seemed to me that, without having any practical utility towards achieving the desired end, which was to handle all questions concerning the proper conduct of the war, it would possess the serious drawback of taking the responsibility off the shoulders of the Ministers, who were the real depositaries of this trust. It seemed to me the duty of the Chamber was to demand the formation of a Ministry capable of inspiring absolute confidence in the country to bring about the successful issue of the war.

Several meetings took place at my house to discuss these questions, and the chiefs of the different parties in Parliament came to them. Finally, of 120 members of Parliament who were then at Constantinople, more than ninety accepted my view of the matter—that is to say, that no other solution of the difficulty existed than that a Grand Vizier should be appointed who could form a Cabinet of men who, like himself, enjoyed the confidence of the country. We therefore decided to appeal to the Sultan to make one more sacrifice—this time of his *amour-propre,* as he had formerly done of his absolutism, to recall Midhat Pasha from exile and pardon him for any fault he had committed, and to give him the task of forming a Cabinet. At the last meeting I drew up a proposed resolution by which the Chamber was to approach the Sultan in this sense. The resolution was submitted to the deputies who were at my house—it was on a Tuesday—and it was to be signed and submitted to the Chamber on the following Saturday, in order to be approved and submitted to the Sultan.

But another event of a most unfortunate character took place on the Thursday afternoon, after the news of the fall of Hardahan had been received. A group of softas invaded the Chamber, and expressed their dissatisfaction at the manner in which the war was being conducted, demanding the revocation of the Minister of War and of Mahmoud Damat Pasha. It was a disastrous contretemps for us all. The Grand Vizier and the President of the Chamber were summoned to the Palace the same evening and martial law was proclaimed. As I read this proclamation I had a foreboding that it meant no good for myself.

On the Saturday I went frankly to the Grand Vizier to ask him to change my position, either by accepting my resignation or by nominating me Minister at Athens, or Governor of my native country. The Grand Vizier agreed to do one or the other of these things, but hardly had I returned to my office than an officer from the Ministry of War came to ask me to go to the War Office at once.

I went, and was conducted to the antechamber of the court-martial, where I found a certain Emin Bey, ex-chamberlain of Abd-ul-Aziz. Later we were joined by Ayah Effendi, Counsellor of State, Youssouf Bey, chamberlain to and the companion of childhood of Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid, and a certain Mahir Bey. After waiting for several hours, another officer came to tell us that by Imperial order we were to leave immediately for Broussa. The same night we were conducted under escort to the port of Sirkedje, where we embarked on board a boat waiting for us and left for Boudagna. At dawn we arrived at this place, and were taken by carriage to Broussa, where Vely Pasha, Governor-General of the vilayet, received us very kindly. There we learned that our destination was not

Broussa itself, but that we were each of us to be exiled to a different town in Anatolia, the one chosen for me being Kutahia. We were a good deal annoyed by this information, because on leaving Constantinople we had not had the time to take, nor had we thought of taking with us all that was necessary for a long journey. The Governor-General, at our request, asked the Sublime Porte for authority to help us in this difficulty. But having received no reply after waiting for three days, Vely Pasha agreed to advance us a sum of money against a receipt signed by myself and on the guarantee of my salary in arrears.

It was only later that I learned from a circular dispatch from the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Embassies abroad that the motive for the severe measures taken against us was our supposed complicity in the demonstration of the softas at the Chamber. But as this movement was calculated to bring to naught my real work, which was a revolution brought about by the deputies, it will be seen to what extent the Government was deceived, and that its treatment of us was really the work of our political enemies.

An agent of the Ministry of War, disguised as a softa, preceded us all through our journey, and told the people of the country that we were the men who had given up Hardahan and sold their brothers to the Russians. The country folk were so furious against us, that wherever we passed the night all food was refused us, and the mosques in the villages, which were the only places where we could obtain shelter, were stoned. Just before entering the little town of Pazarjik, a group of wagoners, who were conveying cereals for the Army, attacked us with knives and revolvers, and, if it had not been for the energetic intervention of the mounted gendarmes who were escorting us, we should have been massacred. Not only did we owe our lives to these good fellows, but they arrested the ringleaders among our aggressors, whom we handed over to the authorities at Pazarjik. The result of the inquiry into their conduct which took place in our presence, was that they were put into prison and the Governor-General was informed of the incident.

On my arrival at Kutahia, a house was placed at my disposal by the local authorities, and for more than two months I stayed there under the guard of a gendarme, who lived in the same house, while I was deprived of all communication with the outside world. Mine was one of those strange cases that one meets with rarely even in the East, in which a political prisoner pays the rent for his own prison, and even entertains his jailor at his own cost!

I was much touched by the attention of Hadji Ali Pasha, a native of Kutahia, the doyen of the Viziers, and an ex-Governor-General, who, on retiring, settled in his native town to end his days. On the occasion of the feast of Bairam he thought it his duty to come and visit the exile and wish me a happy fête. He went to the governor first of all to announce his intention, and proposed that, if the latter wished, they should come together, which they did. This friendly little visit resulted in a relaxation of my imprisonment, for a day or two later a telegram arrived from the Palace expressing His Majesty's regret that I had been treated so severely, and ordering that I should be allowed to go about the country freely.

The people of Kutahia, who when I first came believed all that was said about me, and considered me a traitor and acted accordingly, as soon as they learned the real facts, changed their attitude completely. I received such tokens of sympathy from them during my stay, that I have always had the pleasantest memories of my exile in this beautiful and historical land. At first, by the wish of the Sultan, who had ordered our removal from the capital, we were allowed to retain our official titles, and receive the salaries attached to them, but later the President of the Chamber objected to this arrangement—not unnaturally—and we were allowed a monthly subvention paid out of the Civil List.

I also received income from my forest at Valona, as to which a Hamburg business house had made a contract with me for the purchase of the box-wood. These people accepted certain changes which I asked them to make in view of my position as an exile, and, taking over the entire exploitation of the forest, paid me a fixed sum per ton. This arrangement gave me sufficient to live upon, as well as providing something over which enabled me to buy a large estate in the neighbourhood of Eski-Ischehir. I was thus supplied with an agreeable occupation and ample distraction in a magnificent country, with all the pleasures that the interior of Anatolia affords.

The fall of Plevna was a terrible blow to the country. This event was followed by a melancholy procession in the streets of the town and on the country roads of poor discharged soldiers wending their way homewards, a prey to abject misery, and many of them literally dying in the gutter. Deeply afflicted by the sight of these poor creatures, I started a campaign to get their situation improved. I obtained the adhesion of a number of the notables of the place, got the necessary funds from the Government, and we founded a hospital and shelter for these unfortunates.

Despite my exile, I never ceased following with the deepest interest the progress of the war. I could not help but see, to my great regret, that the Sultan and those around him, especially his First Secretary, Said Bey, who directed the entire policy and organised the advance of the armies in the face of the enemy, took no steps with the view of benefiting from the first victories which the brave Osman Pasha gained over the Russians. We knew that at the outbreak of war Russia had entered into an undertaking with England on three points—first of all, not to extend her military sphere of action in countries where British interests existed; secondly, to conclude peace if Turkey asked for it before the Russian armies should have crossed the Balkan chain, and thirdly, not to occupy Constantinople. Those who directed Turkish policy never even thought of profiting by these engagements. Even when Midhat Pasha went to Vienna to try and bring about an intervention, the Ambassador was reprimanded for the attempt he had made to arrange an audience for him with the Emperor Francis Joseph, and Midhat Pasha was constrained to leave Vienna immediately. The exiled Grand Vizier complained bitterly of the way his acts were judged at Constantinople, and also as to the manner in which the war was being conducted. As a matter of fact, Midhat Pasha was knocking at the wrong door ; we all knew that Austria's only object was to obtain Bosnia and Herzegovina, as to which she had already had assurances from Russia, and the Sultan had at first seemed to be agreeable.

It may well be asked why Turkey provoked this war with Russia when she might have avoided it, and why, moreover, once engaged on it, she did not seek to benefit by the first successes to save her honour and the Empire ? Only those who lived at the time in this political *milieu*, and who had penetrated the secret of the intimate thoughts of this new Sultan, can solve the enigma.

The Sultan, who had mounted the throne of his ancestors under such exceptional conditions, and after such a series of tragedies, thought only of his own personal safety and the increase of his personal power. After such a tempest as that which Turkey had just come through, the recovery of calm and peace for the country would have constituted such a success for the head of the Government that his prestige would inevitably have lessened the power of which Abd-ul-Hamid was so greedy. Again, had the generals of the Army obtained peace from the Tsar by the force of their resistance, this would have given them such an ascendency that the Sultan would have regarded it as an eternal menace against himself. These are the real reasons why the Sultan plunged his country into a war, the issue of which could not but be fatal to the Empire ; such are the reasons why he tried to crush his people in order to dominate them.

The Fleet, which was in a position to have the mastery of the Black Sea, instead of threatening the flanks of the Russian Army in Bulgaria, or of serving as transports for the troops, and thereby enabling them to come to the aid of the victorious Osman Pasha's army, was sent to the Caucasian coast in order to carry out a demonstration before Sokhoum Kalé. The élite of the army, under the command of Suleyman Pasha, instead of being sent to Plevna by way of Varna and Shoumla, was left to be crushed before the impenetrable pass of Shipka. All these military blunders, which one would almost say were committed on purpose, led to the catastrophe of Plevna, and the triumphal march of the Grand Duke Nicholas's army on Constantinople, which was very nearly evacuated, in spite of the presence of the English Fleet. A general council, convoked under the presidency of the Sultan, had already taken this decision, and the *procès verbal* of this meeting constitutes one of the most extraordinary documents of the reign of Abd-ul-Hamid.

The Treaty of San Stefano was regarded throughout Turkey as a sentence of death passed on the Empire. In Asia Minor, where I was in exile, every one was exasperated, and expected the worst from the state of affairs created by this peace settlement, which for the moment possessed no single advantage except to avoid further bloodshed and further misery among the civil population.

Only the intervention of Great Britain gave the people a ray of hope, and Lord Beaconsfield, who started an energetic struggle to revive Turkey, was regarded by them as a special providence. The Treaty of Berlin, which radically modified the Treaty of San Stefano, published at the same time as the Treaty of Cyprus, brought some consolation. The application of the clauses of this latter treaty was awaited with impatience and confidence by the entire population of Asia Minor. Colonel Wilson, who was by this treaty (which placed Asia Minor under military consuls) appointed Consul-General for the whole of Asia Minor, and a Major, in whose jurisdiction was Kutahia, were received by the people with the utmost enthusiasm. These two representatives of Great Britain visited me, and on several occasions I had talks with them, and we were able to exchange views.

Unfortunately the hopes raised by these events were destined soon to be dissipated. The change of Cabinet in England and the influence of German politics changed everything. The sterile threats contained in the instructions given to Sir G. J. Goschen, Ambassador Extraordinary at Constantinople, served to increase the irritability of the Sultan, who thereupon asked Berlin to send him councillors, who should be given the title of Under-Secretary of State, for all the Ministries, and officers for the organisation of the Army. After that, Asia Minor was overrun in all directions by these German agents, while engineers from the same country came and studied the provinces and prepared plans for the construction of future railways.

Before the last-named events, however, a reconciliation had taken place between the Sultan and Midhat Pasha, who was in England. Midhat Pasha was permitted to return to Turkey, and one of the Imperial yachts brought him to Crete, where he was to await the orders of his master. Appointed Governor-General of Syria, he went to Damascus, where he was visited by Sir Austin Layard, then British Ambassador. This visit gave rise to fantastic rumours and to interpretations of the most extraordinary character. It was even alleged that Midhat Pasha was going to be proclaimed viceroy of Syria, under the auspices and with the support of Great Britain. This absurd gossip met with no faith in the country itself, but on the contrary his reintegration in the service of the Empire raised in every one the expectation of his speedy return to power at Constantinople. The hope was increased by his transfer to Smyrna as Governor-General, which was regarded as the last stage on the road to the capital.

Owing to the proximity of his new residence to my place of exile, our correspondence became more constant, and in his last letter to me he told me he was going to make a formal demand of the Sultan for me to be reinstated in the service in his suite.

A little while later, however, Midhat Pasha was arrested and transferred under escort to Constantinople, to be tried for the alleged murder of the late Sultan Abd-ul-Aziz. This is how this news arrived at Kutahia. It was on a Friday, when a number of my friends and acquaintances, having learned that Midhat Pasha had been called to Constantinople, came to congratulate me, believing that this could only be because he was to be nominated Grand Vizier. Being myself curious as to what had happened, I went to the telegraph office to try and learn the truth. The post-master gave me the copy of a telegram which the English Consul-General at Smyrna had sent to Colonel Wilson, who was then on a tour of inspection at Oushak, announcing the arrest of Midhat Pasha and his temporary replacement by Kiamil Pasha. Hyder Pasha, the ex-Governor of Slivono, whose retirement from this latter post I have related in another chapter, was at this time at Kutahia as governor. All the time that Midhat Pasha's return to power seemed to be certain, he could not sufficiently show his devotion and admiration for him, but now that he learned what had happened, he broke out into the most unmeasured invectives and imprecations against his former chief.

The arrest of the great Liberal Statesman came as a thunderbolt to me, and was a cruel deception to the people. Like all others who knew the truth as to the death of Abd-ul-Aziz, I never for one moment entertained a doubt concerning the absolute innocence of Midhat Pasha. But we knew that the Sultan would not have arranged this trial unless he had definitely made up his mind to finish with Midhat Pasha and had assured himself as to the judgment. Hence we were convinced beforehand what would be the fatal issue of the trial. Those who sat on this extraordinary Court of Justice, which held its sessions in the Palace of Yildiz, consisted of some who entertained an implacable hatred against Midhat Pasha, and others who had no scruples about committing the most monstrous act of injustice in order to obtain the favour of the Sovereign. Even just before the end, the Sultan still wavered as to whether he should go on with the trial or stop it and reappoint the accused Grand Vizier, and he would probably have decided on the latter course, had he not been won over by a particular enemy of Midhat Pasha, a young chamberlain, who had arranged the whole *mise en scène*, and who feared for his own safety if that Minister should again come into power.

After his trial and condemnation, Midhat Pasha was exiled to the Tahif. He was not executed owing to the able and energetic intervention of Lord Dufferin, then British Ambassador at Constantinople, following the excitement which the trial created in England, where Mr. Gladstone in the House of Commons paid a great testimony to the disappearing statesman.

After this event I lost all hope of ever obtaining any change in my lot. To cap my misfortunes, some friends in whom I had reposed the greatest confidence, and to whom I had entrusted all my interests, thinking me lost for ever, changed their attitude, and this rendered my financial position extremely difficult. I had to liquidate all I had in order to constitute a small capital, with which I hoped to ensure the livelihood of my family in exile.

I received news of Midhat Pasha, who was confined in the fortress of Tahif, from Izzet Pasha, who was transferred from the Hedjaz to the Governor-Generalship of Broussa, and came on a tour of inspection to Kutahia. He was an excellent and honest fellow, but possessed of an original and eccentric character. He had taken part in the campaign against Ibrahim Pasha in Egypt, and was fond of recounting the battle of Nezib, and the military merit of the famous Moltke, who was with the Turkish Army in the capacity of Chief of Staff. Izzet, who was extremely superstitious, regulated all his movements by the indications and instructions he received from his old servant Emin, who accompanied him everywhere, and would sleep on a mattress during the audiences given by his master. Emin was quite mad. On their journeys, when they crossed a stream, he would throw himself from the carriage into the water, and then get back to his place beside his master in the carriage, which would be inundated with the water from his dripping clothes. The Pasha greeted this as a good augury. When they were staying in any place, the Pasha would not dream of leaving it until Emin had announced that he had been there long enough ; they left when the spirit guided him. In spite of these and other quaint and original traits of character, I am grateful to Izzet, because he made a very favourable report spontaneously to the Palace concerning myself.

Some months later I received a telegram from Said Pasha, now Grand Vizier, announcing my appointment as Governor of Mardin (Mesopotamia), and asking me to carry out the instructions given me by the Minister of the Interior. The latter, through the Governor of Kutahia, passed me the Imperial order on the matter, and told me to proceed at once to my post.

Though I was happy enough at thus reaching the end of my seven years of exile, I was very dissatisfied as to the place to which I was being sent. To leave Kutahia with my family to go and take up a post in the very desert would have been worse even than exile. I had nothing for it, however, but to put a good face on my bad fortune, and I at once sent a reply to the Porte thanking the Sultan, and announcing that I would start for my post as soon as I should have received a sum of money that was due to me. A few days later I left for the capital, and as soon as I landed went to the Sultan's Palace, where I saw the First Secretary, Riza Pasha, an old friend of mine, who received me very cordially. I asked him to submit my gratitude to the Sultan for the pardon he had extended to me. While I was there, Hadji Ali Bey, the second chamberlain, arrived and conveyed to me the salutations of His Majesty. The Imperial permission was also given me to remain at Constantinople as long as I might desire, and to submit to His Majesty any wishes I might have concerning my own future.

The next day, which was a Friday, I went to the house of the Grand Vizier, Said Pasha, and from there to Edhem Pasha's, Minister of the Interior. Surprised at my unexpected appearance, they both hesitated to receive me, fearing the impression their friendliness might create in high quarters. Said Pasha asked me to go and see him the next day at the Sublime Porte. As to Edhem Pasha, with whom I had been on terms of intimacy, when he met me in his own garden, he lost his head, and, uttering a cry of astonishment, without even giving me the time to explain how I had been received at the Palace, simply turned on his heel and bolted. On the morrow, however, first Said Pasha and then his colleague, as they had now had time to find out the changed attitude of the Sultan towards me, also altered their manner. The Sultan's conspicuous amiability to me on this occasion was followed by a remarkable communiqué in the papers to the effect that the Sultan had learned with astonishment that several high dignitaries of the Empire were still in exile, and had ordered that they should be allowed to return to Constantinople. Furthermore, it was stated to be His Majesty's wish that any other such exiles who might have been forgotten in this general amnesty were to consider themselves as recalled. My friends pointed out that this notice was in all probability a prelude to the return of Midhat Pasha, who would in all likelihood be recalled and restored to his rank and honours. I could not help but feel, on the other hand, that something underhand and sinister was threatening him.

As the Ministers allowed me to make choice of another post than Mardin, which, as I have said, was in the desert, I lost no time in settling upon the Sanjak of Bolu, which I had visited during my exile at Kutahia and which suited me in every respect. This request being granted, I was nominated governor of this Sanjak, and left a few days later for my post, where I arrived on the fourth day.

CHAPTER X

1884—1890

As Governor of Bolu—Death of Midhat Pasha—The character of a patriot—Political atmosphere under Abd-ul-Hamid—Problems at Bolu—Putting down brigandage—How I dealt with the Circassians—Administrative reforms.

The Sanjak of Bolu is the eastern portion of the ancient Bithynia; the chief town is the old Bithynium, later on in history known as Claudiopolis. It is one of the most important Sanjaks of the countries in Asia near the capital. It contains eight districts, with a population of more than 300,000, of whom some 50,000 are emigrants, either Circassian or of other Caucasian races, who have settled in the fertile and picturesque plain and forests of Dustché (the old Duze). One of the chief towns of the district is Bruss-at-Hypion, over Melen, which was the hunting-lodge of the Byzantine Emperors, the ruins of which still have an archæological interest.

Bolu is a highly cultivated country, and has great wealth in cattle, especially in Angora goats. The whole of the northern portion, extending from the mouth of the Sankarius to the frontier of Kastamounia, is extremely beautiful, and contains great forests and woods of all kinds and all sizes; there also is the basin of the famous coal-mine of Heraklea. The town of Bolu, in the midst of a delightful and fertile plain surrounded by wooded and picturesque mountains, contains many ruins of important edifices built by the Emperor Adrian in honour of his favourite Antinous, whose native town it was.

I arrived at my post in the month of May, when the spring heightened all the natural beauties of the land, and my pleasure was proportionately great. But this did not last long. On the second day after my arrival the post brought me the sad news of the death of Midhat Pasha of anthrax in his exile in the Tahif. It was the realisation of my lugubrious presentiments at Constantinople.

The disappearance of this statesman, after so much suffering, was a terrible blow for me. I lost all taste for work and all hope for the future of the Empire of which he had been the real reformer. For weeks I remained a prey to the deepest melancholy. I despaired of everything—the future, life, and humanity. If a man of such eminence, of such unselfish and disinterested life, who had done so much for his country and humanity, could meet with such treatment at the hands of those who owed him honour and gratitude, and finally reach such a tragic and miserable fate—what, I asked myself, could other mortals hope for or expect ?

If ever there was a statesman whose value and character have not been acknowledged and appreciated as they should be, it was this poor Midhat Pasha, who was a Liberal, in the very fullest sense of the word. Having lived so long with him and seen him at work, I was always astonished at the little that was thought of him by Western Statesmen, and, above all, by those who passed for being great Liberals, like Gladstone and Gambetta. It has only been my long residence in Western countries, where I have seen at first hand the workings of their Governments and Parliaments, that has enabled me to understand the reason.

The Liberals of Western Europe seem to me like the heirs to great fortunes, who think only of enjoying the wealth acquired by the efforts and the sacrifices of their ancestors. In these countries Liberalism is only the label of a party or a means of attaining to power. But in the autocratically ruled countries of the East, in which even the thought of Liberal ideas arouses conflict and evokes all kinds of dangers, Liberalism is surrounded with trouble and risk. It never helps any one to attain to power; on the contrary, those who espouse such thoughts run the risk of losing position and even their lives. These were the risks that Midhat Pasha willingly incurred. He possessed the supreme courage of making known his Liberalism at the moment when any other, having arrived at the height of his ambitions and power, would rather for his own preservation have shown a certain reserve, for though a Statesman may espouse Liberalism at the commencement of his career as a means of attaining to power, it is rare for one to reveal a Liberal spirit when he has got power, and push it to such a point as to risk losing all.

Rarely, too, does one meet among politicians with men who, like Midhat Pasha, far from objecting to the opposition of others, find a certain pleasure in opposition and even provoke it. Every time he conceived any fresh political plan, he hastened to announce and explain it to his friends and collaborators, not in order to arouse their admiration, but really and truly to excite criticism. I had the good fortune of enjoying his esteem and confidence, and I remember well the pressure he used to exercise to draw criticisms from me on various political questions that interested him. Nor was he satisfied with general or vague approval. Although, as I have said elsewhere, he had a real genius for administration, he was aware of his own shortcomings, and succeeded in finding out such capacity or special traits among his colleagues and subordinates as would complete his own work. The opposition of his critics, instead of annoying him, rather added zest to his efforts. Once at Nish, at the time that he was Governor-General, one of the notables of the province was continually attacking him, decrying his work and denouncing him to the Sublime Porte. One Friday, on the occasion of the official reception, as this antagonist manifested some surprise at being received among the other notables and treated with the same consideration, Midhat Pasha said to him,

"You are astonished at my reception of you? Let me tell you I am very pleased at this opportunity given me of meeting you, and I am happy that we have arrived at a point when a Governor-General cannot treat any one ill simply because he opposes him."

Among many other qualities possessed by Midhat Pasha, his indefatigable activity and his unbending integrity were rare in the East. He not only originated and planned all the projects of reform, but it was he who laid the schemes before the Councils, and he himself after the sittings of the Councils even drew up the reports.

I do not need here to speak of his political acts or of the feelings of equality he entertained for all the races of the Empire. He was probably the only Turkish statesman who had no prejudices against the other races and accorded no privileges to the dominant race. On the eve of the deposition of Abd-ul-Aziz, he sent word confidentially in the night to the three Patriarchs, inviting them to be present at the ceremony of the proclamation of the new Sultan. On his appointment to the Grand Vizierate after the proclamation of the Constitution, the first official visit he made was to the Patriarchs, and it was the first time in the history of the Empire that a Grand Vizier had visited these dignitaries.

The political atmosphere that had ruled since the accession of Abd-ul-Hamid, added to the results of the disastrous Russo-Turkish war, had already changed the face of the whole country; especially were the workings of the central and provincial administrations transformed.

My life of exile during the first seven years of this reign, although I felt that there were considerable changes for the worse, had not permitted me to obtain any proper opportunity of measuring the enormous change which had resulted in the government of the country. But from the very day that I returned to active service and took up the administration of this province, I was struck and depressed at the moral degradation which I found in all governmental spheres.

The Sultan thought only of attaching to himself elements in all the branches of the administration by breaking all the traditions and upsetting all the rules which had so far obtained. Functionaries and employés of the State of all classes and all grades were free to do what they pleased on condition only that they gave proofs of fidelity and devotion to the Sovereign. Everywhere existed abuse, corruption, and disorganisation of all kinds, to the disadvantage of the country and the inhabitants.

In the province of Bolu, which is so near to the capital, and whence a great number of the personnel of the Palace was recruited, such as cooks, boatmen, and others, the pernicious influence of the Palace was so great that abuse was organised everywhere, and a nexus of corruption was established between the governors, the civil, financial, and judicial functionaries, and the notables representing the population, with a view to plunder, and all was done openly. Each district enjoyed the attentions of one or more bands of brigands, who were organised and protected by the chiefs of the local authority and the gendarmerie as well as by members of the council of the country. Brigandage, indeed, was practised as an organised industry, a due proportion of the proceeds being paid over to the representatives of the public authority and their local agents. The country was divided into three zones of influence for brigandage. The first zone, comprising the environs of Bolu and its neighbourhood, was the prey of the band of Zaybekolu. The district of Ghérédé, with the north, was exploited by another band, called the Djosh Omer, and the rest of the country was exploited by the Circassians and other emigrants.

I began my governorship by first establishing order in the administrative service of the chief town and the governmental offices. After that the principal matter to which my attention was turned was to root out the scandal of the brigandage, which made life impossible to the rural population as well as to the commercial class. A few days before my arrival a band of Circassians had attacked and plundered a caravan between Devrek and Heraklea. A little while after my installation the same band, reinforced and reorganised, attacked the Imperial post on the high route from Angkora, near the district of Gheunuck (dependent upon Bolu), and stole some valises containing valuables worth several thousand pounds being sent from Constantinople to the town of Angkora. About the same time I learned that the Kaimakan (or deputy governor) of the district of Ghérédé—an ex-servant of the famous Mahmoud Nedim Pasha—who was a sort of "partner" of the Djosh–Omer band, had frequent meetings with the chiefs for the distribution of the booty. Furthermore, it transpired that the Kaimakan of Dustché had had a stormy interview with respect to his share of the plunder with the Circassian band in the interval between their two different acts of brigandage.

In the face of such an indescribable and intolerable state of affairs, I sent a telegram to the Sultan himself, setting forth the situation clearly and frankly, and asking His Majesty either to give me by telegraph the power and means of ending the scandal or to recall me immediately. The reply from the Sultan was to give me instructions to take all necessary measures to put an end to the situation, with the announcement that two squadrons of Imperial cavalry were being sent and put under my orders.

Without waiting for the cavalry, I went myself to Dustché, where I organised a corps of mounted gendarmerie composed of Circassians. From there I went to Handek, situated between the two provinces of Bolu and Ismit, where I convoked all the chiefs of the Circassians (the Abbazas), explained to them the gravity of the situation caused by these impudent attacks, and told them of the Sultan's categorical orders to me. I gave them to understand that in cases of this sort all the chiefs as well as the tribesmen must be considered as accomplices and as actually responsible for the evil deeds. Attacks of this importance could not take place without the knowledge of the chiefs, who alone could make reparation by arresting the culprits and handing them over to the authority of the Sultan. His Majesty had hastened to send forces sufficient to deal with the mischief, which he would increase if there was need of it to attain the desired ends, but those forces would be employed rather against the chiefs themselves if their connivance became evident by their not fulfilling their duty of fidelity to the Sovereign.

In face of my obstinacy, they were forced to hand me on the spot a written engagement to do the necessary. Then they all left, and a few hours later—about midnight—they returned, bringing with them the ringleaders of the band and a large number of the rank and file, besides a considerable portion of the booty in gold which had been stolen from the mails.

On my return to Dustché I continued the pursuit, still through the intermediary of the chiefs, and in a few days the whole band was arrested, with the exception of one chief, who was believed to have been drowned in the River Sankarium while trying to escape. Also the entire booty was recovered and handed over. The Abbazas, a turbulent but impressionable and intelligent race, were so impressed by the presence of the armed force, the promptitude of the pursuit, and, above all, by the carrying out of the official promises that had been made, that from that moment, until my departure from the province, they remained consistently submissive and honest.

I have already had occasion to speak of the character of the Circassians. They are held in and rendered obedient to authority by nothing so much as just treatment and fidelity to promises made. A few days after my arrival at Bolu a Circassian chief came to me with a letter from the famous Tahir Pasha, an Albanian and the chief of the Sultan's bodyguard. Tahir Pasha recommended this Circassian to me as a foster brother of Ilias Bey, Master of the Sultan's Wardrobe. He gave himself up to the authorities, a repentant criminal, and offered his services to help arrest his accomplices. In order to be agreeable to my compatriot, as also in the interests of justice, I promised the fellow his liberty. But one market day a telegraph employé of Dustché recognised my man as the chief of the band which had attacked the caravan of which he was a member near Heraklea. He had him arrested and brought to me. A curious crowd accompanied them. I confess I was perplexed. In spite, however, of the stupefaction which the act was certain to cause among the public, I considered it advisable to keep to the promise I had made. In forcing the Circassian chiefs to undertake the arrest of their guilty compatriots, I announced, by means of posters, that those who helped to arrest the brigands, even if they were accomplices, would be exempt from all judicial proceedings and punishment, and at the same time would receive a pecuniary reward of £T40. These promises were faithfully kept, and those who deserved it received the reward and remained immune from all judicial annoyance—facts which, I am sure, had more influence on the Circassians than the appearance of the armed force and other parade of authority.

I must say, to the credit of the Circassian race, that during the six years of my administration succeeding these events, not only did they cease their robberies and all other misdeeds to the prejudice of the native population, but, recognising the benefits conferred on them by a fair and just treatment, which was specially suited to their particular mentality, they became an element of order and real aid to the authorities. I attribute my own success in the treatment of the Circassians to this frank recognition of their racial characteristics. They like to be treated chivalrously rather than by sternness, and one can demand sacrifices from them if one has consideration for them. A couple of episodes which occurred about this time will show the character of the people.

These incidents helped to give them a belief in me and in my consideration for them. During my stay at Dustché a Circassian of the locality abducted a young girl to marry her, but as this abduction took place under conditions contrary to the usual rules and customs of abduction for the purpose of marriage, it aroused indignation and commotion among the populace. The girl was taken from her ravisher, who thereupon disappeared. As he was brother to one of the Circassian gendarmes in my employ, and knew it was impossible to hide for long, he gave himself up voluntarily. One night he came to the house in which I was living and asked to be received. I received him, but instead of putting him under arrest, I told him that, as he had come to my private dwelling, I considered it contrary to the rules of hospitality to detain him, but advised him to go himself the next morning to the prison, which was the proper place for him after the act he had committed, and so I let him go. The next morning he did as I advised, and gave himself up at the prison. On another occasion a brigand escaped from the hospital of the prison. I announced the fact to the chief of his village, inviting him to exert his influence to bring him back. The fugitive's brother went away, and a few days later returned from the mountains with the culprit, who, meeting me in the country on his way to the town, gave himself up to me. "Very good," I replied, "I thought you would return. I quite understand your going away was caused by the fever. Now go and give yourself up to the police authorities." He did so, and his sentence was not increased, as would otherwise have been the case.

As a token of appreciation for my services in putting down the brigandage, the Sultan advanced me in rank and conferred on me the decoration of the Medjidié.

Having delivered the people from this scourge, my next task consisted in inspiring confidence in the population for the authorities, and in making them understand that their aim and object was only to mete out justice and fair dealing. This was at first an uphill struggle, as it was difficult to eradicate from the minds of the people the notion that the public authorities were there to plunder them.

In the first place, those members of the administrative councils and of the tribunals of different degrees who had bad reputations were removed at the next elections and replaced by others whose records were cleaner. Furthermore, as I instituted a new system of allowing petitioners and taxpayers free access to the governor and other officials, without having to go through the mediation of their representatives, whose services always cost them something, they came at last to understand the right they possessed to stand up for themselves.

Another of the injustices under which the population of Asia Minor suffered was the unequal distribution of the taxes. Almost the whole burthen was falling on the rural population, and even among the urban population, who, in comparison with the former, were favoured, the rich still came off the better. My repeated representations made to the Porte to have a revision of the taxation were not favourably received, but by degrees, through the tax distribution committees, held annually, over which I myself presided, I was able to bring about important changes making the impositions more equitable.

Still another important question was the schools. The Sultan, who wanted to bring about uniformity of sentiment among his subjects, tried to do this through the education. With this end in view he ordered that one per cent. of the tithes should be apportioned to the upkeep of the schools, primary and secondary. On the heights of the old citadel of Bolu a lycée was built, and in the chief towns of the other districts secondary schools were started and elementary ones in the villages. Abd-ul-Hamid's whim was, therefore, of real advantage to the cause of public instruction. Another source of revenue was obtained from the sequestration and application to the purpose of the primary schools of the income of the Vakoufs, old religious or public foundations of which the original objects to be benefited no longer existed, and the incomes of which had become the perquisites of influential favoured persons or families. One such I remember was an old Vakouf devoted to the maintenance of a certain bridge. The bridge no longer existed, nor did the road leading to it, and the revenues were paid to a certain notable of the place who was supposed to use them for the entertainment of travellers —which he never did.

I succeeded in putting an end to crying abuses in the working of the mines. Apart from its agriculture and cattle-rearing, which are the chief sources of its income, the province of Bolu possesses coal mines and immense forests, though the defective working and the abuses connected with them prevented the people of the country from deriving any benefit. The whole of the population of the littoral was engaged in the exploitation of the mine of Heraklea, which belonged to the Admiralty. Each individual was compelled to work a certain number of days per year at the extraction of coal without pay. Accounts were regulated between the management of the mine and the mayors of the various villages, and the amounts of the salaries, fixed in a very arbitrary fashion, were used to offset the global taxes of each village. The result was that some who obtained exemption from the forced labour benefited more than those who did the work. I remedied this abuse as far as I could, and incidentally decreased the Government expenses.

A curious incident occurred in 1885, when the question of Eastern Roumelia came on the tapis and orders were given for the mobilisation of the army and the calling up of the reserves. When the reserves, to the number of six or seven hundred, were drawn up at Bolu prior to starting for Constantinople, they refused to march unless they were paid their arrears of salary. They had been given coupons for the amount of this pay, at their last disbandment, but these had never been honoured. The commander of the regiment came to me in great distress, telling me his regiment refused to march, and the position seemed critical. I asked him to leave them to me, and after some hesitation he consented, and I went and talked to the men. I told them they might go home—that they were not wanted at Constantinople. When in astonishment they protested, I said, " No, the Sultan has no need of cowards or of men who think more of a few piastres than of the honour of fighting the enemies of their country." The result was a complete change in the attitude of the reservists, who handed me their coupons and begged me to see that the pay was given to their families. Then they announced their willingness to march.

Having sent my family, which was now growing up, to Constantinople for their education and for other reasons, I asked for leave and went to the capital. During my absence fresh disorders occurred and a new outbreak of brigandage took place. Abdurrahman Pasha, the ex-Grand Vizier, who was now Governor-General of Kastamounia, insisted that I should be sent back to Bolu—if even only temporarily, in case there were other projects for me—and I returned, having again received full power to handle the situation and been given a squadron of the fourth Army Corps. Some trouble arose over the furnishing of proper arms to the gendarmes, who complained that they could do nothing with the old-fashioned Winchesters against the brigands, who were armed with up-to-date Martinis. The

Sultan ordered that the gendarmes should be supplied with Martinis from the Royal Arsenal, but the War Minister refused, and I had to get the Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, to intervene.

Order was restored soon after my return to Bolu, and the brigands, who were tribesmen from Trebizonde, were captured. I was at Bartin, when I was informed by the Sublime Porte that I was to be transferred to the Sanjak of Kirchehir, with permission to go to Constantinople if I desired. After handing the administration of the Sanjak of Bolu to my successor, I returned once more to Constantinople, with the firm intention of abandoning the public service and devoting myself to my private affairs.

During this long period of my administration of Bolu I was very glad at having succeeded in awakening in the population of the country a consciousness of their rights by showing them that the public authorities and their elected representatives were but instruments for their service. Being as I was accessible at all times to those who wanted my help and advice, and insisting until I arrived at a solution of their difficulties, I became a sort of protector or father to them all. I travelled over all the country in my jurisdiction, even the most remote parts, in order to see the situation for myself and find remedies for abuses—which in the interior of the country were unfortunately not lacking.

Among others I visited a mountainous region called Jenidje, the inhabitants of which were all engaged in the exploitation of the forests and the transport of the wood by the River Filios. These poor people had become absolute serfs through the power exercised over them by the wood merchants and the absence of all real authority. I started to group the country all round, and formed a district with a central point. In order to have the Sultan's goodwill for the new district, I gave it the name of Hamidieh. We were going to found a new town under this name at the centre of the district, or the confluent of the Filios, and a ceremony was organised on the spot, for which a number of sheep were slaughtered, according to the Mussulman custom, prayers being offered for the Sultan, who had sanctioned this work of order and justice. Everything was going admirably—unusually well, it seemed to me, as I contemplated the magnificent site of the new town—when a telegraphic order arrived from the Sultan forbidding the foundation of the town. The inhabitants of the neighbouring town of Devrek, who were jealous of this new creation, had " greased the palm " of the Sultan's *chef de cuisine*, a native of the locality, who had got this order from the Sultan. I regretted this contretemps very much, but the amusing part of the story lay in the sequel. As the people of Devrek did not keep their bargain properly with the head cook, he had an order sent to me through the Ministry of the Interior to force them to pay the sum stipulated on the promissory note they had given him ! The irony of it ! I did not, of course, carry out the instruction, but, on the other hand, the next time I went to Constantinople I was not slow to make this scandalous abuse known.

The population of the East are really honest, docile, and good-natured, but their great fault is that they are led by more or less stupid prejudices and by a spirit of hopeless routine. I had much trouble in getting them to accept anything new. In spite of the fact that they had the greatest objection to the construction of new roads and highways, when these were completed they experienced the greatest satisfaction in them. The people of this country traversed by the River Filios were in the habit of sending their wood down the stream on rafts. I wanted to get the same system adopted for the River Melen, and therefore sent for some of the people from the Filios to show the " Melenites " the better method of conveying the wood ; but these latter would not apply it to the Melen, pretending that it would not succeed on any other river.

To overcome this obstinacy, I myself went on one of the rafts that was sent down the rapids. My example convinced them, although the agitation of the water tossing the planks about gave me a disagreeable douche. The River Melen is one of the most picturesque watercourses I have ever seen. Thinking to carry out works to render it navigable, as there happened to be in the place some immigrants from Jorouksu, who are very capable boatmen, especially in the management of rapids, I hired one of their barges to go up the river as far as the Lake of Eftheme. The journey took three days. We spent the first night at a village on the riverside called Beykeny, and there the boatmen, frightened at the stories of the villagers, told the engineer who accompanied me that they would go no further. I only succeeded in forcing them to continue by declaring that I was resolved to continue to the end, even should the journey take a month, and if we were obliged to wade through the water up to our necks. However, we completed the journey without any such difficulties.

CHAPTER XI

1890—1892

RETIREMENT INTO PRIVATE LIFE DESIRED, BUT NOT ACCOMPLISHED—INDUSTRIAL AND FINANCIAL ENTERPRISES—A COMPLAINT AGAINST ME—APPOINTMENT AS GOVERNOR OF GALLIPOLI—A STRUGGLE WITH THE SULTAN—TWO MONTHS' RIGHTING OF ABUSES—GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF BEYROUTH—QUAINT INCIDENTS—TEMPORARY GOVERNMENT OF SYRIA—FISCAL AND OTHER INJUSTICES—RESIDENCE AT DAMASCUS—THE DRUSES AND THE NOUSSAIRI—THE SITUATION OF SYRIA—RECALL TO CONSTANTINOPLE.

ON my arrival at the capital, I handed to the Sublime Porte my resignation of the post to which I had been appointed, with the request that I should be considered as being liberated from all obligations regarding further service with the Imperial Government. With the expressions of my homage, I at the same time explained to His Majesty the reasons which dictated my return to private life. The Sultan received my communication graciously, and sent me assurances that I should continue to enjoy his high esteem.

But, curiously enough, the Ministry of the Interior, very much troubled at my decision, would not leave me alone, but repeated their invitation to me on several occasions by proposing different posts, such as that of Serres in Macedonia and Samsoun in Asia Minor. I had some trouble in resisting this persistent pressure.

I considered it my duty to my family to give up the service. Furthermore, I had always had an inclination for industrial enterprises, and so I was now enjoying a little of the liberty which I had always longed for. Before my departure from Bolu I had bought a mechanical sawmill at the mouth of the River Filios, and the working of this brought in a certain profit, though it was also a source of some worry. My new position of independence brought me into contact with various foreign personages and financial establishments which were undertaking different enterprises in Turkey. I was aided in this respect on several occasions by the kindly intervention of the Sultan himself. Nagelmackers, who was trying to obtain the concession of the Mondanieh-Broussa and the Banderma–Alachehir railway lines, took me into the association he had formed for this purpose, as did also a little later Baron Marquard, who wanted the concession of the Samsoun to Sivas line. I must express my gratitude to the Sultan, who in a very marked manner favoured the granting of these two concessions and put aside the objections made by the bureaucrats of the day either through jealousy or the spirit of routine.

I cannot, unfortunately, speak as favourably of my two Belgian associates, who showed very little delicacy when they were called on to respect their formal engagements made to me in a business matter.

It was at this time that a Mr. Kaula was trying to get the concession for the new Salonika–Monastir line, as to which the Military Commission of Yildiz Kiosk was somewhat unfavourable. As this line interested me particularly from the fact that it was to be prolonged as far as Valona, my native town, I thought it a patriotic duty to aid in the work, and I was able to surmount the difficulties raised, making it a condition that the Monastir–Valona portion of the project should be carried out. But in this affair also my hopes were deceived, and the Monastir–Valona line was never constructed. The reasons were twofold—political and personal. The Central Powers, of whom Kaula and the Deutsche Bank were the representatives, did not favour a line which would serve to drain the traffic of the Balkans to the Adriatic. Also, the Sultan, who was the owner of considerable property at Salonika as well as of the port itself, was not in favour of a line that was likely to compete with Salonika.

This happy period of my life, in which my activities were equally beneficial to the country and to my family, was unfortunately of short duration. A report, or, as it was called at that time, a "journal" against me was presented to the Sultan. This report insinuated that I had earned over £T100,000 (2,000,000 frs.) from these concessions, a sum which it was further indicated I intended to use for a certain purpose I had in view—namely, the deposition of the Sultan and the proclamation in his place of Rechad Effendi, his brother. I was supposed to have come to an understanding with the latter through the agency of my Circassian servants and the Circassian women of the Prince's Palace! In spite of the impression which this extraordinary accusation must have created on the Sultan's mind, he ordered that an inquiry should be made very discreetly into the truth of the matter. This inquiry, of course, showed the Sultan that the charges made against me were a tissue of lies, but at the same time the accusation left its traces. I actually showed the Sultan the contracts of association which I had made with Nagelmackers and Marquard, showing the engagements made between them and myself and the profits I was to earn out of the enterprise. I expressed the hope that His Majesty would approve that a faithful subject should carry out this work for the welfare of the country, and should reap a benefit in the same proportion as the foreign associates, but that if he did not approve, he had only to tear up the contracts. The Sultan expressed his entire approval of the enterprise, and returned the contracts to me.

Some time after this, on returning home one day from an excursion I had made to the Princes' Islands, I found a letter from the Grand Vizier announcing my appointment to the governorship of Gallipoli, with orders to go to my new post as quickly as possible. Next morning I went to the Palace to submit the matter to the Sultan, and to beg His Majesty to give orders to the Sublime Porte to cancel the nomination. But the Chamberlain, Emine Bey, who was entrusted with this mission, came back to tell me on behalf of His Majesty that I ought to accept the post, which would only be a temporary one, and that the Sultan accorded me the Bala, or the highest civil grade equivalent to the rank of Vizier. Without thanking the Sultan for this grade, which at any other time would have been a source of great satisfaction for me, I continued to refuse the post of governor of Gallipoli.

The exchange of communications between His Majesty and myself with regard to this post lasted for months. Finally one day he called me again to the Palace, and when there, the Chamberlain, Arif Bey, transmitted to me the salutations of Abd-ul-Hamid and his desire that I should accept the nomination as a personal friend of His Majesty and to give him pleasure, rather than as a duty to the Sovereign. My continued refusal, it was added, would bear the appearance of an act of insubordination of a nature calculated to diminish his prestige in the public eye, whereas, if I accepted, the Sultan, remembering my willingness, would take care of me in other ways. Pressure was brought on me to accept this view of the matter, and the next morning I went back and requested Hadji Ali Bey, the first Chamberlain, to ask the Sultan what his instructions would be for me with regard to Gallipoli. Since His Majesty so insisted on my taking this post, he must have some particular reason for my going. I was somewhat taken aback by the reply. Apart from a few commonplace instructions, Hadji Ali Bey informed me that the Sultan wished me to send him from Gallipoli some wild ducks for his garden !

Three months after my nomination, in spite of my disinclination for the post, I left for Gallipoli, and, arriving there the next day, began my duties. This province, although not a very large one, with a population of about 100,000, has a special importance on account of its position. I was greatly struck by the degradation of the population, a large proportion of whom are Christians. Though I had been over the greater portion of the Empire either in Europe or in Asia Minor, never had I met a people so debased in character or so lacking in spirit. A curious fact about Turkey is that the different countries making up the Empire show such contrasts in the manners and characters of their inhabitants. One has to live in the various countries in order to understand these distinctions and get an idea as to the remedies for the ills inherent to the different kinds of inhabitants.

In other parts of Turkey the members of the Councils and the elected judges of the Tribunals, who seem in a way to consider themselves the representatives of their co-religionists, mostly assume the task of defending those of their own faith, utterly regardless of the fact that their official character ought to enforce impartiality on them. At Gallipoli, on the other hand, I found the Christian population so poor-spirited and the councillors so indifferent, that I made it my duty to shake them somewhat out of their torpor, which was leaving the population at the mercy of the caprice of some employé of the taxation bureau or other influential but unscrupulous individual. As the people lived only by agriculture, they were being reduced to destitution, from the fact that their fields, their sole source of revenue, were sequestered for debts contracted towards the agricultural banks or other creditors, and were put up for auction without ever being either sold or restored to the owners, although the law expressly forbade that in such cases the land which constituted the living of the family should be sold. I stopped all these abuses through the legal channels and restored the lands to their proprietors.

In the course of the trip I made into the interior of the country, I found in the village of Kavak a large flock of the variety of wild duck which were tamed. Remembering the Sultan's request for wild duck, I thought it would be exactly what he wanted, so I bought up the whole lot—several hundreds—and sent them to the Palace. Thanks were returned to me a little while later, with the intimation that His Majesty hoped also to obtain specimens of a rarer species of wild duck. I, however, did not continue my search for these fowl.

Although my stay at Gallipoli was thus forced upon me, and caused considerable prejudice to my personal affairs, and although I was there so short a time, yet I did not lose sight of the importance of this country, which played so great a rôle in the history of civilisation and especially in that of Turkey. Gallipoli was the first territory in Europe conquered by the Turks. Six centuries before Soliman Pasha, the son of Sultan Orhan, accompanied by a few hundred warriors, crossing on rafts, had set foot on the hill situated between Gallipoli and Bolayir, which bears the name of Namastépé, that is to say, "Hill of Prayer," because it was there that these warriors, when they landed, made their first prayer at dawn. This brave and interesting prince, who died through a hunting accident, was buried at Bolayir, where his mausoleum, situated on a charming eminence, forms a great attraction to the traveller. I often visited this historical tomb and passed the night in the adjacent apartment, which was set apart for the use of the governor of the province. It was here I found the chief of the family of Harami, the descendants of the shepherd who served as guide to the first conqueror of European territory on his way to Gallipoli. This Harami was a poor peasant without any pretension or any knowledge of the dignity of his family. I did my best to uplift him, and to get some of the revenues of the Vakouf of Soliman increased for him by way of a subvention.

Beside the mausoleum at this time was a heap of earth forming the tomb of that poor Kemal Bey, the poet, who, dying at Mitylene, asked that his ashes should be transferred to Bolayir to be interred beside those of Soliman, whom he so much admired and whose glories he had sung. At my request the Sultan ordered the erection of a marble tombstone to his memory.

After a two months' stay at Gallipoli, I again sent word to the Sultan asking to be recalled. A few weeks later I received notice of my appointment as Governor-General of Beyrouth. As it was midwinter, I sent my family to Constantinople and I left by the next boat for Smyrna, where I took the liner for Beyrouth. It was the beginning of January when I arrived. As there had been several cases of cholera in the huts of the lazaret, the port and town were in quarantine, and my landing was surrounded by all the precautions that the sanitary regulations required.

On leaving Gallipoli there had been nothing but ice and snow up to our quitting the Gulf of Smyrna, but at Beyrouth we came upon spring with radiant sunshine, roses and other flowers filling the air with perfume. I found in the town Aziz Pasha, my predecessor, who left three days later for Constantinople, and Vassa Pasha, my compatriot and former colleague at the Philippopolis Commission, now governor of Lebanon, who spent his winters at Beyrouth. It was a pleasure also for me to meet again Colonel Trotter, the British Consul-General, whom I had formerly known at the capital. Admiral Wellesley, a charming and interesting octogenarian, was also at Beyrouth, spending the winter with his daughter Lady Trotter. The day after the departure of my predecessor took place the official ceremony of the reading of the Imperial firman appointing me Governor-General of the Beyrouth Vilayet, followed by the official reception of the consular corps, when I made the acquaintance of M. St. René Taillandier, Consul-General for France, and M. Gubernatis, Consul-General for Italy.

In spite of my resentment at being forced, as it were, to return to the service, against my own personal interests, I must say that the importance of the country of which the government had been entrusted to me, and the charm of the city itself somewhat reconciled me to my lot and encouraged me to apply myself earnestly to the accomplishment of my duties. A further source of satisfaction was that many of my co-workers were persons who had remained since the time of the governorship of Midhat Pasha, and for whom consequently I had a particular esteem. Shortly after my arrival, all traces of the epidemic which had stopped all the business of the country were eradicated, and I set to work at the organisation of the administrative services and the carrying out of different works of public utility.

The town of Beyrouth, which is the chief town of the vilayet, has this peculiarity, that it is removed from the rest of the vilayet, being situated on a promontory of about fifteen square kilometres, and surrounded by country belonging to the government of Lebanon, so that it has no direct communication with the Sanjak depending on its government. To get to the Sanjak and even the cazas by land necessitates the crossing of Lebanon territory. There are houses in the town, the gardens of which are outside the territory of the vilayet. In spite of this curious situation, which constitutes a serious obstacle to the administration and to public order, the harmony existing between the governors and administrative offices of Beyrouth and the Lebanon, and the friendliness uniting the various races inhabiting the two provinces, removed any cause of friction in the regular working of the services of the two countries. A fact, however, which struck me from my first arrival in the country was the indifference, or rather the "disinterestedness," of the population in their public affairs. It was painful for me to see persons of considerable fortune, like the Soursouks, the Boustros, the Tuenis, and others, finding it to their interest to enter into the service of the various consulates in an honorary capacity in order to have foreign protection. I was glad to be able to inculcate different sentiments into them and induce them not only to give up these foreign connections, which could only degrade them, but also to interest them in the affairs of the country of which they were the leading inhabitants.

One of my first administrative tasks was to go on with the works for the port, the studies for which had already been begun. For this purpose a block of houses forming the old town of Beyrouth, with narrow old vaulted passages through which it was difficult to circulate, and which prevented access to the port, had to disappear, and a fine, wide street was built joining the town and the port. We succeeded in procuring the sums necessary for the expropriation of the houses that it was necessary to destroy.

Beyrouth, of all towns in Turkey, possesses the best foreign schools and the largest number of philanthropic institutions. Among others there was a French university and an American college. Unfortunately the superiority of these foreign establishments and the inferiority of the Turkish schools very often excited jealousies, which resulted in irritation and pettiness on the part of the local administration. I could not remain insensible to this galling inferiority of the Turkish schools, but, while seeking to improve them as far as I could with the means allowed me by the Government, at the same time the generosity of the foreigners, who contributed to the intellectual development of all classes of the native population, was extremely gratifying. I had several occasions of expressing my satisfaction with these educational works to the representatives of France and America. On one occasion I learned that in the enclosure of the American College they were building an annexe behind closed gates, as they feared opposition from the authorities. I told the American consul how much I regretted this, and assured him that the local government would give him full authority and even afford him facilities for any construction they wanted to carry out, the only condition being that they would respect our authority. It was at this time, too, that I was able to insist upon the Sublime Porte's legalising the diplomas given to those who had gone through the course of the Medical Faculty, and according authority to practise, which the Porte had hitherto refused to its own subjects. During all my stay in Syria nothing occurred, happily, to trouble my friendly relations with M. St. René Taillandier, who appreciated my recognition of the civilising work of France in Syria.

One amusing incident which occurred about this time will help to show the quaint minor problems with which a provincial governor has to deal. One day the Jesuit director of the Arabic newspaper *El Bashir* came to make a complaint to me against the Secretary-General of the vilayet, in whose province it was to act as censor to the local newspapers, because he insisted upon suppressing the words "Oum Allah" ("Mother of God"). This Secretary-General, Hassan Effendi, who had formerly been private secretary to Midhat Pasha, and for whom consequently I had a particular friendship, was somewhat irritating in his exaggerated devotion to his duties as censor. He maintained that a Mussulman Government could not permit the use of the words "Mother of God," and I had the greatest difficulty in the world to make him understand that the suppression he was trying to make was equivalent to insisting upon the Jesuits abandoning the principal articles of their faith!

Curiously enough, this same Jesuit on another occasion had arranged to perform in the hall of the University a drama of pre-Mahommedan times which had to do with Mecca and the Holy Places before the time of Mahommed, which was a thing offensive to followers of the Prophet. Hassan Effendi had accepted an invitation to be present, but when I learned what was going forward, I prohibited the play, and the French Consul-General, who came to see me on the matter, quite understood my objection and frankly accepted the prohibition.

About this time a French squadron, under the command of a Vice-Admiral, visited Beyrouth, and the officers and sailors were officially received by the authorities, and, apart from the official side of the visit, were very cordially welcomed by the local population. The squadron was recalled somewhat suddenly before all the demonstrations in their honour had taken place. A little while later the Italian squadron came, but did not meet with the same cordial reception, a fact which M. Gubernatis, the Consul-General, pointed out to me.

In consequence of the death of the Patriarch of Antioch, Mgr. Spiridon was nominated to the post and was expected at Beyrouth *en route* for the seat of his Patriarchate, which was the town of Damascus. The Arab Archbishops, and particularly the one of Beyrouth, who did not want a Greek Patriarch, protested against this election, which they insisted was defective and illegal. But as the Sultan had already accorded the *berat* of investiture to this priest, the refusal to accept him would have been an act of disrespect to the Sovereign on the part of the Arab prelates, and so I was instructed by the Sublime Porte to calm the effervescence and to make it possible for the Patriarch to be installed at Damascus. Excitement reigned at Beyrouth, where the Archbishop exercised a great influence, and this was increased by the efforts of the Russians, through their dragoman, a certain Shahardé. Personally I was convinced of the justice of the objections of the Arab element, and all my sympathies were for the Archbishop of Beyrouth, but the necessity of maintaining the prestige of the Sovereign compelled me to work for a satisfactory compromise, and I succeeded in obtaining the obedience of the Archbishop to the Imperial rescript, after a number of interviews with him, in which I assured him I would do all I could to uphold the Arab cause. But in spite of my reassuring reports to Constantinople, the Grand Vizier, alarmed by the suggestions of the Governor-General of Damascus, Osman Pasha, which were exaggerated if not purposely distorted, continued to have doubts, and warned me of the responsibility I was assuming in case there were disorders caused by the arrival of the Patriarch. As, however, I was sure of the venerable Prelate and of the obedience of the Orthodox population of Beyrouth, who repulsed all the intrigues of Shahardé, I telegraphed to the Patriarch bidding him leave Jerusalem immediately for Beyrouth, and I telegraphed at the same time to the Grand Vizier to inform him that the Patriarch would arrive at Beyrouth, where he would be received by the faithful, and that after the official visits he would leave for his post without the slightest incident occurring to mar the event. On the day of his arrival his reception was just as I had indicated. The Archbishop, who was beside me at the official visit of the Patriarch, made a speech in Arabic somewhat violently protesting against the appointment, of which the Patriarch did not understand a word, and so everything passed off satisfactorily and in order.

I now undertook a trip through the different Sanjaks forming the Vilayet of Beyrouth in order to study the country. Leaving on board the *stationnaire* "Arcadie" (a former Greek corsair captured during the Cretan insurrection), I arrived with my party at Tripoli, and landed at the maritime town, some five kilometres from the actual town of Tripoli, to which we took the tramway that had been built by Midhat Pasha during his government of Syria.

An incident happened just after my arrival in this town which gave rise to extraordinary agitation among the people, who were all in the streets to witness our arrival. I was standing at a window of the Konak, or government building, watching the people, when I saw a big crowd running towards the building. They stormed the courtyard, shouting and furious, and dragging with them a young Catholic priest. It seemed he had wounded a little boy of five years of age with an air-gun, and the mother was carrying this child in her arms. While we were doing our best to calm the wailing mother and attend to the child's injury, I had different parts of the town put in charge of the military in order to prevent any aggression on the part of the populace either against the convent to which the priest belonged or to the Christian quarter. When the crowd had dispersed and order was restored, I was visited by the French vice-consul and the superior of the convent, who asked that the priest should be handed over to him. According to the laws governing such cases, the priest ought to have been guarded in the convent in the hands of his hierarchical superior, but as his leaving the Konak at the moment, when the public temper was so much aroused, might have occasioned a serious conflict, I refused their request, and kept the priest not so much as a prisoner, but rather as my guest until the affair should be cleared up and the public informed. As a matter of fact, I soon found out that although the priest was guilty of imprudent conduct in shooting sparrows in the streets of the town, there had been no aggressive intention on his part, and the child was wounded by the gun's going off at the moment that some children were trying to snatch it from him. The priest was handed over to his superior the following evening, to be held at the disposal of the police authorities until the end of the trial.

After a few days spent here, living in tents fixed in a delightful position between the two towns, and near to some huge orange gardens, which were in full bloom, we left for Latakia, stopping *en route* at the little island of Arvad, where we visited the walls and buildings and colossal monoliths of the Phœnicians. As this island is not so much as a square kilometre in extent, the little town is highly original and quaint in appearance, its houses being piled one on top of another, with tombs on the vaults of the old walls. The inhabitants, whose sole means of livelihood are fishing and navigation, are obliged to bring all they need, even to drinking water, from the town on the mainland opposite them, which is two miles off. They had to pay a duty on everything they brought in—an injustice which, added to the natural disadvantages of their position, served to render them miserable indeed. Without further ado I abolished this unjust tax on the spot, handing the director of the Customs of the vilayet, who was with me, an official order, and to the population the decree releasing them from this nuisance. The act caused such delight among the people, that all the Arab women went on to the roofs of their houses and started a loud ululation of joy, which lasted until after we were out of hearing.

The same evening we arrived at Latakia, where we began the examination, with a few competent men from Tripoli who had come with us, of the questions of the railway and port which were to serve as the beginning of the lines of penetration into the interior of Syria. While I was engaged on these studies and the organisation of other services, I received an order from the Sultan confiding to me the *ad interim* governorship of the Vilayet of Syria, and directing me to go to Damascus, the chief town, before the retiring Governor-General, Osman Pasha, left for his new post, the Hedjaz.

One thing that struck me during my stay at Latakia was the unjust treatment meted out to the Noussairi, a tribe living in the mountains on the Syrian littoral from Lebanon to Alexandretta. These mountaineers were as a race remarkable for their physical beauty, but, having been the objects of persistent persecution for centuries, they naturally felt but little sympathy for their neighbours. Rigorous measures had frequently to be taken against them by the Government; and every time there was need of repressive measures, these were accompanied by severity out of proportion to their misdeeds, and most of them, who took refuge in inaccessible mountains, lost their properties. When they returned after a certain length of time, these properties were returned to them, though they were no longer considered as the owners, but as tenants, and were compelled to pay rent. What was still worse was that these "tenants" of their own lands were forced into the bargain to pay taxes, like the actual proprietors! On learning the facts, I took steps to remedy this deplorable state of affairs by restoring their lands to them, and ordering the local authorities to treat them more justly in future, which I was sure would not only render them more contented, but would go far towards attaching them to the Government.

I returned to Beyrouth by the Messageries boat, accompanied by Zia Bey, Governor of Latakia, whom I had chosen to replace me as deputy at Beyrouth during my stay at Damascus. Osman Pasha arrived at Beyrouth at the same time as I did. Being in a hurry to get to his new post, he had not waited for me at Damascus. This poor Osman Pasha, who was entirely paralysed, was taken in and out of his carriage in the arms of his servant. When I went to take leave of him, he asked me to wait for his servant to come and place him in an erect position. He was a sad spectacle, and it must have produced a depressing effect upon the Arabs of the Hedjaz to see a paralysed man at the head of the government of a country which needed an active man who could be everywhere. But Osman Pasha had special titles to consideration at the hands of the Sultan, for it was during his first governorship of Mecca that Midhat Pasha and his companion, Damat Mahmoud Pasha, met with their deaths.

From Beyrouth, crossing the Lebanon and spending a few hours of the night at Shtora, I arrived on the evening of the following day at Damascus. I found many old friends there, among others, General Shefket Pasha, who had been sent into disguised exile. It was the Sultan's habit to send to these far countries all the persons he wanted to remove from the capital for personal reasons. A few days after my arrival Omer Rushdi Pasha, commanding the sixth army corps, the headquarters of which were at Damascus, came to take command in place of Osman Pasha, who had combined the government of the vilayet with the command of the Army. As the consuls-general of the foreign Powers had their residence at Beyrouth, there were at Damascus only consuls and vice-consuls, the most important of whom was Mr. Eyres, the British Consul. It was during my stay at Damascus that I got to know Mr. Wood, the former British Consul-General, who had played an important rôle in Syria and in Mesopotamia by counteracting Egyptian influence during the Turco-Egyptian war. He carried his ninety years with vigour, and had come to the country to settle an affair of some properties which he owned. He charmed us with accounts of the events of those times.

But in respect of age, Mr. Wood might be considered a child in comparison with an ex-Janissary who had been at Damascus for about a century. He was nearly 150 years old, having served in the corps of Janissaries under Abd-ul-Hamid I. It was his custom to make walking-sticks, which he presented to each new governor of Damascus. I received mine and paid him well for it. The old man remembered all the principal events that had taken place during the reign of four Sultans up to the abolition of the Janissaries by Mahmoud II.

Syria is the most beautiful and the most important country of Turkey in Asia, and yet, in spite of that, Damascus, which is the capital of the vilayet, and enjoys all the conditions suitable to the capital of an Empire, when I was there lacked everything. The government building was totally unworthy of the importance of the place. There were no barracks for the Army, no place suitable to lodge the commander and the staff. There were a few barracks in the old citadel in a tumble-down condition, and I was horrified to discover the condition of the military school, which annually furnished to the Army more than a quarter of its officers. It was an old *medressé* (seminary) contiguous to a mosque which had been turned into the École Militaire. Not only was there an utter lack of sunshine in this building, but a watercourse actually flowed through the dormitories, and the place was consequently so damp that the mattresses and pillows of the pupils were just as if they had been wrung out in water. I at once informed the Sultan of this state of affairs, and started negotiations with the commandant for the construction of a new school. The sale of some old châteaux on the coast and in the interior would procure all the funds necessary for the building of new schools and barracks.

There were many things to study and many projects worth carrying out in this vast and beautiful country, where means were not lacking, but, as I was only there as *locum tenens*, I waited for the Sultan's decision as to whether I was to return to Beyrouth after the appointment of a new governor at Damascus, or whether I was to remain at the head of the two vilayets, united as they were before. It was, as a matter of fact, a mistake to divide Syria into two vilayets—that of Beyrouth with the littoral and that of Damascus with the interior of the country. This separation, depriving the latter of the sea and the former of the hinterland, had the result of paralysing all works of economic development, which required unity of direction and administration. In the meanwhile I limited my activities to pushing forward current matters and profiting by my stay to know and study the country.

I was surprised a few days after my arrival at Damascus to receive a petition from the Deputy Governor of the Druses, Ibrahim Atrach, who apart from his official position was, by his birth, chief of the Druses, and who was in prison. It appeared that when he had refused to pay a sum of money to Osman Pasha in recognition of his being kept in the post he occupied, the ex-Governor put him in prison. On the day of Osman's appointment as Governor of the Hedjaz he tried to make an arrangement by accepting £T500, and Ibrahim Atrach was going to pay him in order to be quit of the matter. On going to the bank, however, escorted by a police officer, to draw the money, Ibrahim Atrach met a friend who informed him of Osman Pasha's transference. Ibrahim thereupon again refused to pay the money, and he was returned to prison. I had him brought to me immediately, made him all the apology I could for the unpardonable conduct of my predecessor, and reinstated him in his post. I also severely blamed the Secretary-General, who had carried on the government up to my arrival at Damascus, and the director of the prison.

In this connection, I learned of another injustice of which the Druses of Hauran were victims. The tithes charged upon their crops, instead of being fixed as they should be at 10 per cent. of the annual amount, were fixed arbitrarily, and as in most cases the amount fixed exceeded the total production of the cultivators, these latter had to purchase an extra quantity in order to complete the amount demanded. It was this crying injustice which continually provoked discontent, ending in revolts, suppressed by means of sanguinary struggles. This matter also I notified to the Sultan and the Porte, and the next time I returned to Constantinople spoke seriously on the matter to His Majesty.

As the fêtes of Bairam approached I left Damascus for Baalbec and its ruins. *En route* I spent a night at Shtora, where I saw Mr. Wood for the last time. At Baalbec I received two invitations to luncheon in the open air—one from the Moutran family at Ras-ul-Ain at the source of the little river which went through the town, and the other from the Bedouins who were encamped in the plains of Baalbec. Both these banquets were interesting, but the second surpassed the other considerably in originality. Before arrival at the camp we were met and received by the chief of the tribe and by the Bedouin women, who danced on camels while juggling with swords. Luncheon consisted of a roast and rice deliciously prepared, and we greatly enjoyed it, but afterwards I was somewhat disgusted at being obliged to be present at the successive circles of feasters who followed us one after another round the dishes, and at having to watch them eat the rice with their hands while the grease trickled through their fingers, which they wiped by rubbing them on their abdomens, over which they wore long shirts. As it was a question of etiquette that I should remain, I asked permission to sit for the rest of the time with my back to this rather primitive banquet. When all had fed, there was a quaint dance performed by young girls forming a circle round a youth playing a flute.

Baalbec being half-way to Beyrouth, where my family had arrived during my absence at Damascus, I went on to meet them. A day or two later I received news that Reouff Pasha had been appointed Governor of Damascus and was to arrive in a few days. It therefore seemed to me useless to return to that town, and I stayed at Beyrouth, where the new governor arrived in due course on his way to his post.

Syria ought to be the most prosperous and flourishing country in the East, alike on account of the fertility of its soil and the facility of transporting and exporting its produce, and by the intelligence and the industrial aptitude of its inhabitants. But, unfortunately, the unjustifiable negligence of the authorities, and the vexations the population had to put up with through lack of security and unjust taxation, were the causes of the country being extremely backward. Entire villages had become the private property of some influential persons or of some governor. In order to shield themselves from the extortionate taxation, the villagers were compelled to sell their lands and become tenants. Such transactions were revolting from every point of view, all the more so as they were contrary to the law of landed property, which expressly forbids the sale *en bloc* of the lands of a village or its transformation into private property. It was an absolute and pressing duty for the Government to change such abuses, and it did not seem to me to be a difficult matter to apply the law by obtaining the funds for repurchase for the real proprietors of the ground, and getting security for them in the future from fiscal vexations. My recall to Constantinople, however, stopped my bringing this project to fruition, and I regretted this all the more, as it would have given a notable development to the agriculture of the country. The considerable estate of Baron Edmond Rothschild at Safit came into this category, with the difference that Rothschild, who had spent millions on it, was contributing to the development of the wealth of the country, and was giving the population an example and a stimulus by the establishment of wine and perfumery industries.

In Beyrouth I came face to face with an extremely disagreeable incident. There was an under-governor at Tiberiad who, to avenge himself on a member of the family of the French Consular Agent, his neighbour, for a supposed slight, had the young man arrested and put into prison. As the father, although Consular Agent of France, was a British subject, a telegram relating the circumstances was sent to Colonel Trotter and another identical to the French Consul. A copy of the telegram was handed to me by the telegraph office, and I took up the matter immediately. As it happened to be Sunday, Colonel Trotter and M. St. René Taillandier did not get knowledge of the matter until the Monday, and when they came to me with a complaint, I was able to tell them the affair had already been judged, and the Deputy Governor had been reduced and held for judgment.

During my stay at Beyrouth, my compatriot, Vassa Pasha, Governor of Lebanon, died. He was afflicted with cardiac trouble, and his condition rapidly grew worse, leaving no room for hope. As the post of Governor of the Lebanon was an important one, and local difficulties might have arisen if it had been left vacant, I thought it best to advise the Porte of the facts, after having seen the doctor. To my surprise the Grand Vizier, instead of treating my communication as confidential, wired to Vassa Pasha, asking him how he was, and then informed me he had a reply from him saying he was getting better! A day or two later the poor fellow died. The Porte entrusted the interim government of the Lebanon provinces to the Administrative Council, but as the council was composed of the president and ten members, there speedily arose a conflict between them which stopped all the working of the administration. I was asked to arbitrate, and succeeded at last in arriving at a formula satisfactory to both sides.

The training-ship, with the cadets on board, under the command of Rear-Admiral Hallil Pasha, later Minister of Marine, came to Beyrouth, and it was during a banquet given to them by the Municipality in the public gardens that I received a telegram from the Sultan recalling me at once to Constantinople to be placed in charge of an important mission. Another telegram followed from the Grand Vizier announcing the appointment of my successor, and a few days later I returned to the capital. The people of Beyrouth regretted my departure, I am pleased to say, but nevertheless the telegram caused pleasure among those present on the festive occasion I have mentioned, since its terms led every one to believe I was being called to the post of Grand Vizier. The town of Beyrouth presented me with a souvenir album of photographic views of the place and its monuments bound in massive gold with an emerald in the centre. On my arrival I considered it my duty to present this album to the Sultan, saying that it was given me not through any virtue of my own, but as His Majesty's representative. The Sultan returned it to me with the remark that I ought to keep it as an interesting souvenir.

CHAPTER XII

1892

My memorandum on the state of the Empire.

On my arrival at Constantinople, I went at once to pay my respects to the Sultan. His Majesty replied, cordially welcoming me, and informed me that I should shortly be informed of the task which he wished to entrust to me. As it was the end of the summer, it was difficult for me to find proper quarters for my family, so we installed ourselves for the time being in a furnished villa in the island of Prinkipio, a charming locality which enjoys a beautiful climate.

In the meanwhile the Sultan asked me to submit to him a report on the general reforms of the Empire and the policy that ought to be pursued. I prepared a lengthy memorandum which I submitted to His Majesty, and the chief passages of which were as follows:

"The founders of most great Empires, which, as history shows us, have owed their growth to a series of favourable circumstances, cannot be compared in the matter of merit with those who have foreseen and arrested the decay that inevitably follows the period of an Empire's glory, by introducing reforms calculated to give it new life and a fresh impulse to its prosperity, for every Empire that has carved a path for itself by the sword has at the same time sown the seed of its decay. In such Empires we find the descendants of the conquerors who hold the rights and privileges acquired by the conquests of their ancestors, and are therefore the privileged class, opposed to those who have to support their domination. The former, sure of themselves and puffed up with wealth and power, easily fall into sloth and ignorance ; the others, forced to make a way for themselves in their effort to overcome the misfortune of their subjection, often achieve a degree of intellectual development which gives them the upper hand and is among the first causes of the loss of Empires born of conquest.

"There have been few Sovereigns who have had the perspicacity to foresee the approach of such disaster, and have succeeded in finding remedies to avoid the trouble by establishing reforms upon a basis of equality.

"The Ottoman Empire is of all nations the one that has most need of reform, and therefore of reformers. It was Your Majesty's august father who first saw the need for reforms, and succeeded in his efforts to apply them. I am happy to say that, having taken over the sovereign power at a critical moment when, in spite of the political successes of your august father, the Empire had lost power at home and credit and prestige abroad, Your Majesty was able to cope with a most disastrous war and to restore order and inspire confidence among the people. Hence Your Majesty ought to be considered as the sole reformer of this Empire.

"Your Empire, by its geographical position and by its immense natural resources, led by so enlightened a Monarch as Your Majesty, ought to enjoy a great position in the world. Unfortunately the manner in which the country is administered, and the way in which political questions are treated, are far from equalling the exalted and manifold intentions of Your Majesty for the success and good of the country ; and I fear that you are being deprived of the honour of being the reformer of a great Empire, just as your people will be deprived of the happiness of benefiting by a glorious and prosperous future.

"I would that all your faithful servitors who love the country would concentrate their efforts towards making your reign a source of greatness for the Empire, so that your august person may occupy a distinguished place in the pages of history, which will judge your acts and merits impartially. If we compare the economic and political situation of your Empire with its past prosperity, which is shown us by the ruins we pass at every step, with that of other countries, and more especially with the Balkan countries, which, yesterday an integral part of the Empire, have succeeded in a short while in developing themselves in an exemplary manner, we are forced to the conclusion that if there has not been retrogression, there has certainly been unpardonable lack of progress.

"The most sacred rights of the Empire as regards her defence, and her most vital interests in general have been treated with such indolence and indifference that even the enemies who seek her dismemberment are astonished. The two most serious questions for the Empire—those of Egypt and Bulgaria—remain in suspense. This neglect is causing the loss of a country like Egypt, which constitutes the solidest guarantee of Turkey's position in the world and her right to the Caliphate, as well as the Suez route, the most important in the world. It is furthermore causing a change in the friendly feelings of a great Power, of whose friendliness and aid the Empire always has need, which might perhaps be forced at an international conference—either as the result of a war, or on some other provocation—to take measures which would result in Turkey losing her European position, if not even her capital.

"The hearts are sore of all Your Majesty's loyal subjects who have the slightest sense of duty, and are able to foresee to what these things are tending.

"Since the last war the European Powers have seemed to abstain from persistent intervention in the internal affairs of Turkey or in her political questions. This attitude is regarded by the undiscerning as a political success.

The annoyances resulting from the interferences of Europe and her imperious recommendations regarding internal reforms cannot be denied. That portion of the Ottoman people who reaped some benefit from these recommendations, feeling grateful towards the foreign Powers in question, placed their hope of salvation in them ; the others received this continual pressure from abroad with repugnance as a matter forced on them.

" Europe, after having for centuries sought out a formula for the solution of the Eastern question, in the course of which she took part in sanguinary wars, ended by acknowledging that the best practical solution was the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire, whose territorial integrity has served as the pivot of the European equilibrium. The Treaty of Paris, ensuring the independence and territorial integrity of your Empire under the common guarantee of Europe, has given the Empire the opportunity of continuing in all security on the path of progress, and of ensuring means of defence against the eventual aggression of Russia, who was preparing for revenge. The two great Western Powers who have sacrificed the blood of their soldiers for the salvation of the Empire, have also not spared their money in efforts to develop her wealth and increase her power.

" It is unfortunate that the last reign, instead of profiting from all this in a practical manner, committed the error of relying upon the Treaty, the dispositions of which change with time and with persons. The extent of this error and its prejudicial results for the Empire can be seen in the last war and in the difficulties of the present time. The first effect of the change created in the European situation in consequence of the French defeat was the abrogation of just that clause which was of most interest to the Empire. The preponderance and the political hegemony of Germany changed the views of Europe regarding the Eastern question. Germany, in order to consolidate her new position and to prevent her vanquished enemy, whose strength was growing with more rapid strides than before the war, from preparing for revenge, has consistently tried to create difficulties and problems for each Power. Knowing that the Eastern question is a source of rivalry and of jealousies between them, she has used it as a hatchery of disputes.

"The two Powers most interested in the East are Great Britain and Russia, but just as they differ in their interests, so also they differ in their way of defending those interests. Russia, though rejoicing in having by her latest success arrived at the accomplishment of her eternal policy tending to the dismemberment of Turkey, sees that the independence of the Balkans obtained at the price of so much sacrifice, instead of assuring her domination of the East, has on the contrary barred her road to the Mediterranean; and she is now seeking for a favourable opportunity to repair this defect in her previous policy. England, the mistress of dominant positions in the Mediterranean, which assure her special interests apart from the integrity of the Empire, uses Egypt and Bulgaria as the two centres of gravity of her Oriental policy.

"Such is what short-sighted people consider to be a success. Is it not in reality isolation? And Your Majesty knows that if isolation for any other State is a sign of weakness, it is death for the Ottoman Empire.

"Turkey, as the result of her defeat, has lost the Danube, the first bulwark of her defence, while through unpardonable negligence, she has lost the second line of defence, the Balkans. Russia, on the other hand, possesses a naval force in the Black Sea which is capable of seizing the Bosphorus and the capital; and she is preparing a stroke which, Constantinople once in her possession, might finally settle her accounts with the Western Powers, either as regards Balkan questions or as regards the Mediterranean. As to England, it is true that she has assured her route to

India for the moment by the occupation of Cyprus and of Egypt. But would these suffice for her to combat the Russian danger, should this Power, her great rival in Oriental interests, seize Mesopotamia, or possess a naval force capable of menacing her in the Mediterranean? If England could no longer count on the support of Turkey in such circumstances, her obvious policy would be to create a new State which would be useful to her in resisting Russian aggression; and such a State could only be formed of the countries of Egypt, Tripoli, Syria, Mesopotamia, the Hedjaz, Arabia, and the Yemen, surrounding the Suez Canal and the Persian Gulf, whose populations are homogeneous, and are united by language, manners and religion.

"I do not hesitate to say that in whatever way the rivalry between these two great Powers is finally settled, whether by war or by some compromise, the result must be evil, if not disastrous, for the Empire and for the Caliphate. The remedy for these dangers, I need not remind Your Majesty, must be a wise and far-seeing policy and an enlightened and equitable system of administration at home. As the interests of the Ottoman Empire through her geographical position touch the whole world, but in a very particular way the people of the Orient, her foreign policy should have a double vision—a world policy in relation to the Great Powers and a special policy for the Balkan States.

"If we look for a policy that will end the isolation of Turkey, we shall come to the conclusion that this will only be arrived at by an understanding with either Great Britain or Russia. Russia, to achieve her ends, hesitates before no political measure. She has always admitted the possibility of an understanding with Turkey as a means of arriving at her objects. Since the war the sentiments of the Russians with regard to the Turks have changed, and they would accept an entente with pleasure. But it is interests and not sentiments that guide political actions, and as the dream of possessing Constantinople has but grown with time among the Russians, having been passed down from generation to generation, I do not think they would accept an understanding which would remove the possibility of the realisation of this dream. Ever since Russia has carried on direct relations with the Western Powers, she has always sought to prevent an understanding being arrived at between either Turkey or France and England, and with this end in view she has worked to create a chasm between England and France, sometimes by promising Egypt to England, sometimes by offering other parts of the Empire to France. Thus the occupation of Egypt by England accords with Russia's policy, as it constitutes a cause of separation between the two nations. Should Russia, on account of her Oriental interests, find herself engaged in a war in which Germany and France took no part, Russia would try to promise Egypt to France, in order to have her co-operation or her benevolent neutrality. Even should France and Germany take part in a world war, Russia would use Egypt as a pawn in order to make a present of it according to circumstances.

" If Turkey seeks to come to an understanding with Russia on the Egyptian question, Russia only needs to recommend Turkey to continue her hostile attitude towards England and to make her vague promises. Should Turkey be disposed to arrive at a really clear and definite understanding with Russia, the latter would not only promise her the retrocession of Egypt, but also the return of the fortresses in Asia Minor, the renunciation of her war indemnity, and release from the Public Debt. But against all these concessions Russia would ask for herself something of far more value—that is to say, a point in the Straits, which she would occupy and fortify ; and although Russia would pretend that this entrenchment in the Straits was merely to defend herself against the aggression of

Western Europe, and would not touch the independence of the Empire, it is natural that she would never allow Turkey to become so strong as to be able to drive her off. Can one doubt that the day when Russia no longer feared the Western Powers, she would drive Turkey out of the Straits, which she considers to be the door to her own house?

"On the other hand, England is compelled always to assure her communications with her Eastern possessions; and as her geographical position does not allow her to possess the whole extent of an independent route to India or Australia, and as her traditional policy is rather to have friends that will assure her this route than be obliged to protect it by her arms and her money, she would certainly seek to have a sure guardian for these ways of communication. As reciprocal interests and the geographical position of Turkey point to her as the only possible guardian of this trust, it is therefore a sacred duty for Your Majesty to recognise the advantages of such a charge, and to do your best to arrive as quickly as possible at a real and sincere understanding with England. Your Majesty will realise better than any one else the harm that might be caused to the Empire if England were forced to take measures to attain the security she desires by other means. That is why I venture once more to insist with Your Majesty on the necessity of arriving at such an understanding.

"It is true that England, by her more or less selfish policy for some time past, has wounded the feelings of Your Majesty, as well as those of your faithful servants, but in State affairs it is interest that guides politics and inspires conduct. Should Your Majesty decide to-day to break with England, you would be obliged to seek an understanding with Russia and her Allies, but as these are only seeking to reduce the Empire to a condition which will compromise her future, I conclude that there is nothing left for you to do except to come to an understanding with

England and arrange the question of Egypt. I am sure that the day Your Majesty recognises the advantages that would result from the establishment of relations based on the mutual interests of the two countries, consecrated by so many acts of friendship during more than a century past, not only would the Egyptian question be given a solution, in conformity with the rights and interests of the Empire, but there would even be a way of arriving at a satisfactory understanding with regard to Cyprus. As soon as the present difficulties which form an obstacle to the Empire's occupying her position in the European Concert are surmounted, all the clauses of the Treaty of Berlin favourable to Turkish interests which have not as yet been applied, would be applied. Only two Powers were directly interested in the Treaty of Berlin, but England, being dissatisfied with Turkey's attitude, does nothing in her favour, and tries to restore order in Eastern Europe by other means. Russia, though irritated at having lost her influence in Bulgaria, nevertheless has the satisfaction of having created a great Bulgaria, which has swept away the obstacle of the Danube fortifications, and leaves her a free road to Constantinople. For this reason she has an interest in having the right to consider the Treaty of Berlin abrogated so as to be able some day to occupy Bulgaria. The Bulgarians recognise this possibility, which they consider as a loss of their independence, and they would not hesitate to come to an understanding with the Empire. I am convinced that as a consequence of an entente with England, the reoccupation of the Balkan Passes might be realised without causing any excitement in Europe and without arousing Russian intrigues.

" A useful policy for the present and for the future would be one that would tend to establish an entente between the Balkan States by the conclusion of a defensive alliance and an economic accord, the prelude to the constitution of a great Oriental State. Roumania, Serbia, Montenegro, Greece and Bulgaria, in order to strengthen their positions in relation to their powerful neighbour, and to assure their mutual relations among themselves, need an armed force, or rather a body of political police. On what Power should fall the rôle of forming such a political police force? Russia has at all times wanted to assume this rôle, and all the wars she has undertaken, and all the sacrifices she has made for centuries past, have had this in view. But the people of the Balkans, who would look upon such intervention and protection as the nullification of their national independence, would never submit to it. Austria might be considered as qualified to occupy such a post on account of her special constitution and the experience she has gained in governing heterogeneous elements, but the Balkan States would be afraid of her absorbing all the economic resources. Under the circumstances, there remains only Turkey which could serve as the centre round which the Balkan States should be grouped.

"The establishment of a free entente such as I suggest would give the peoples of each State the right to settle in any part of the great Empire, and to be considered as belonging to it, with freedom to undertake any enterprise they wished. Turkey would have the advantage of having re-established her unity as a State with the old frontiers, but instead of having to devote all her resources to preventing the emancipation of the people who have now become independent, her strength would reside in the unity of the people for their mutual defence, and their resources could be devoted to the economic development of the Empire."

After speaking of a number of other advisable measures connected with justice and the civil and financial administration, the memorandum continued:

"The principal source of the wealth of the country being agriculture, as the development of this national industry depends on the means of communication which assure the farmers the sale of their products at good prices, rather than on pecuniary advances or credits, the question of railway construction in the country ought to engage the Government's serious attention.

"Here, according to my humble advice, are the principal lines the immediate construction of which is highly desirable—first, a line starting from the capital and terminating at the Persian Gulf: that is to say, the Bagdad line. Then branch lines leaving the different centres traversed by the main line, such as Sivas, Diarbekir, Karbout, and terminating at the natural ports of each centre in the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Then the purchase of the Kassaba line, which was laid down for the Government, and its prolongation on the one side, via Karahissar to Konia, and by way of Kutahia to Eskichehir; on the other side by way of Baldikessar to Banderma.

"The approximate length of this series of lines would be 2,800 kilometres (1,750 miles), and for their construction an initial capital sum of £T16,000,000 would be required. As half of the revenue apportioned for the constitution of the capital of the agricultural banks is £T200,000, and the taxes for public works in the vilayets traversed by the projected lines is £T380,000, or a total of £T580,000, with this sum as a guarantee it would be possible to raise a State loan of £T10,000,000. Of this £T7,700,000 could be set aside for the building of 1,400 kilometres of line—or, in other words, the lines from Angkora to Massia-Sivas and from Massia-Samsoun to Alachehir-Konia, from Karahissar to Eskichehir, and from Alexandretta to Aleppo or Berijik. These lines could be built by contractors in a space of five years. Of the sum remaining, the Kassaba company might receive £T1,700,000 for the redemption, and the prolongation to Banderma would be built.

"The State lines built and exploited during the five years would be ceded to exploiting companies which would undertake to pay the State so much per cent. out of the mileage receipts, and these receipts might form the capital for the building of the rest of the lines."

I learned that the Sultan had already been put *au courant* with the idea of the formation of a federal Eastern State. After receiving my memorandum, he sent me a study on the same subject which had been presented to him by the King of Montenegro, who had previously spoken to His Majesty about it when he was his guest. The Sultan, I must say, studied all the political and social questions and suggestions which were presented to him, and accepted suggestions with great amiability. His failing was that he was always absorbed by small daily questions and troubled by events the importance of which were exaggerated by his imagination. Hence he never had the time to reflect on these projects and suggestions or to give practical solutions to them. To induce him to carry out enterprises of any importance, strong pressure from an outside Power was necessary—pressure like that of the Emperor William.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EGYPTIAN QUESTION.

A FEW weeks after my return to Constantinople I received a telegram from the Palace asking me to go there immediately. I was received by Hadji Ali Bey, who, having announced my presence to His Majesty, communicated to me the Imperial desire, which was textually as follows :

"The Sultan is very much troubled at the turn which the Egyptian question has taken. He is aware of the painful impression caused on public opinion, which imputes the entire responsibility to His Majesty. As the Sublime Porte has not succeeded in arriving at a satisfactory solution in the interests of the Empire and of the personal dignity of the Crown, the Sultan has thought to entrust you with the matter ; but in the first place he would like to know your personal opinion, and if you do not find it possible to arrive at a satisfactory solution, His Majesty would like to see you in order to study it with you."

While by no means blind to the responsibility involved in the acceptance of so delicate a task, I did not hesitate to say frankly what I thought. I asked the First Chamberlain to tell His Majesty that in my opinion the Egyptian question was one of life or death for Turkey. It was thanks to Egypt that the Sultan had acquired the title and the right of Caliph. It was the Sultan's duty, I added, frankly and sincerely to try and arrive at an understanding with Great Britain. The refusal to ratify the Drummond-Wolff Convention had undoubtedly created a very serious situation. It was puerile to hope to re-establish the old order of things in Egypt, but there was every chance of arriving at a satisfactory result if the Sultan showed a disposition to come to a rapprochement with England, whose friendship and support were indispensible for Turkey's maintenance as a European Power and the preservation of her position in the world.

My remarks, reported faithfully to the Sultan, must have produced a certain impression upon him. Hadji Ali Bey conveyed to me the Sultan's order to begin at once a thorough study of the whole question, and prepare a report. I must say my task seemed to me not a little delicate and difficult, not merely on account of the innate obstacles, but also through the lack of order and sequence in the political acts of the Sultan. But the fact that my personal feelings concerning the policy to be pursued with regard to England were well known, and this notwithstanding the Sultan had addressed himself to me to solve this question, led me to believe he had changed his tactics and seriously wanted to find a solution. After the following Friday's prayer the Sultan called to him my old friend Marshal Chakir Pasha, who was then political councillor and member of the Military Commission, told him of the mission he had given me, and instructed him to assist me in the work. Next day, Chakir Pasha asked me to go and see him, and then told me of the Imperial instructions. We set to work together, and a few days later (December 3rd, 1892) I handed my report to His Majesty with a *projet de convention*. The following are these documents:

1. REPORT OF ISMAIL KEMAL BEY

"The crux of the Egyptian question lies in the desires which France for centuries past, and especially during the three periods of her world influence, has shown with regard to Egypt. This ought to serve as a starting-point in the search for means of remedying the state of affairs created by recent events, to the great detriment of our political rights—a state of things which may cause the ruin of the Empire.

"Leaving out of the question facts that belong to relatively distant times, if we study the proposals made on the morrow of the signing of the Treaty of Paris by Napoleon III to England with regard to Egypt and the Arab countries of Africa; and if, on the other hand, we examine the dispositions which the French Republic manifested towards England at the beginning of the crisis, and after the fall of Ismail Pasha, we shall be convinced that if there is danger for Egypt in the future, such danger will arise out of this possible (eventual) understanding of France with England.

"We are well aware both of the character of England's pretensions over Egypt and of the extent of our interests in this country, but we ought nevertheless not to ignore the fact that it is the pretensions of France which have impelled England to occupy Egypt, and that it is the fear of seeing France profit by a favourable occasion to lay hands on the country and threaten the road to India and other British possessions, which forces England to prolong the occupation.

"England understands the difficulties arising from this occupation, and in order to leave it she awaits a European conflict, so as to come to an understanding with Turkey, or if she does not succeed in that, to arrive at an understanding with France.

"As the present British Government is in favour of a rapprochement with France, the danger of an understanding of this nature seems to-day to be more probable than ever before.

"A solution of the Egyptian question based upon an

Anglo-French understanding would entail not only the loss of the sovereign rights of Your Majesty in Egypt, but would open up an era of aggression and claims on the part of France and other Powers, who would doubtless seek a rational means of settling the Eastern question on the new basis.

" It is for Your Majesty to prevent this understanding by taking the measures necessary to consolidate your rights and assure the future of your Empire.

" As to your humble servant, since the day when Hadji Ali Bey communicated your august orders to me, I have applied myself to the task, and have the advantage of submitting to Your Majesty a proposed convention which I have drawn up. The question is in itself highly important and very difficult, but the rights of Your Majesty are so precise, and the interest for England in safeguarding them is so real, that I do not doubt Your Majesty's good intentions would meet with the warmest support from the English Government and full approbation from the guaranteeing Powers."

2. The Proposed Convention

" *Art. I.*—His Majesty the Sultan, in his exalted capacity of Sovereign and Master of Egypt and its dependencies, having declared that he has the unshakable intention of maintaining for ever the privileges and immunities accorded in virtue of the Firmans dated 1257 of the Hegira (1841) and of others bearing later date to the Khediviate of Egypt, the clauses and dispositions of every act and international convention passed in virtue of the special authorisation between the Khediviate and the Powers, the Khedivial administration established in conformity with these Firmans, and the territorial integrity of Egypt—Her Majesty the Queen of England undertakes to guarantee the inviolability of the sovereign rights of His Majesty the Sultan of Egypt and his dependencies, the maintenance of all the privileges and immunities accorded to the Khedivial Government and Egyptian territorial integrity, and to lend her land and naval forces for the suppression of all internal disorder or aggression from without against the above-named sovereign rights of the Sultan, the administration of the territorial integrity of the Khediviate and the disposition of international acts and conventions.

"*Art. II.*—His Majesty the Sultan, in the contingency foreseen by the preceding article, undertakes, in agreement with Her Majesty the Queen of England, to send his naval or land forces to Egypt, and he reserves the right to have recourse to the means prescribed by article 10 of the Convention of the Suez Canal to maintain the order and integrity of Egypt.

"*Art. III.*—The august parties contracting will be obliged on the disappearance of the causes provoking the armed occupation of Egypt simultaneously to withdraw their forces and evacuate the country. The evacuation must be effected within twenty days from the date fixed. The cost of the army of occupation, either in common or separate, will be chargeable to the Egyptian budget. If Turkey, finding herself occupied elsewhere, is unable to send a force at the moment when the events take place which occasion the despatch of armed troops, England will not be hindered from sending a force and using it. In any case Turkey might send officers belonging to the different arms to follow the British Army and put themselves under the command of the High Commissioner, and she will have the right to send her forces when they become available.

"*Art. IV.*—The present Convention defining the rights and duties of the august parties contracting does not comprise for Turkey either the power to alter the *status quo*, to modify the privileges or immunities, or to abolish the international conventions, nor the right for England to claim territorial or political advantages or exceptional favours for her nationals.

"*Art. V.*—The present Convention will be communicated officially to the Powers who signed the Convention of London and the Treaties of Paris and Berlin.

"*Additional Article.*—The date of the withdrawal of the English army of occupation will be fixed in the course of a year from the ratification of the present Convention. If the two high parties find it necessary to prolong the occupation more than two years, Turkey will have the right to send her troops at no matter what moment of the period of occupation that shall be fixed afresh."

3. CHAKIR PASHA'S REPORT

"In conformity with the orders with which Your Majesty honoured me verbally on Friday, I hastened to join Ismail Kemal Bey and to study with him the plan of a convention to propose to England for Egypt.

"Indications lead one to suppose that the Liberal Party, which has just succeeded the Conservative Party in London, wishes to arrive at an understanding with France on the question of Egypt. It seems, according to the latest information, that negotiations on the subject are on the eve of being opened.

"As I had the honour of saying to Your Majesty the other day, if an understanding is come to between France and England, leaving out Turkey, the bonds uniting Egypt to this Empire would be entirely destroyed. It is for Your Majesty to weigh and appreciate the gravity of the prejudice which an understanding of this sort would cause to your sovereign right and your prestige as Caliph.

"The absence of any move and a long-continued silence, no matter on what reasons they may be based, would lead to the belief in Your Majesty's acceptance of the existing state of affairs and would leave the way open for a direct understanding between France and England, the result of which would be the loss of Egypt. Consequently, I again beg Your Majesty to ask England to conclude a compromise which would safeguard your sovereign right and would satisfy English interests. I am of opinion that the proposed convention drawn up by Ismail Kemal Bey, which I hasten to place at the feet of Your Majesty, answers entirely to the views of Your Majesty."

On the receipt of these documents the Sultan sent word that he would study them and come to an understanding with Chakir Pasha and myself as to the course to be followed. Exchanges of views continued to take place, but no decision was come to.

About this time the European journey of the young Khedive Abbas Hilmi, and his famous *ordre du jour*, attracted the attention of the British Government, and Mr Gladstone, in the course of a speech in the House of Commons, declared that France had no special claim to interfere in Egypt, as her rights were only the same as those of any other Power. In notifying these facts to the Sultan, I pointed out that this speech of the British Premier might be regarded as an indirect invitation to reopen negotiations without the intervention of any other Power. Three days after I had handed in this further report, the Sultan's aides-de-camp came one after another to ask me to go at once to the Palace, and there I was given instructions to go to the house of Chakir Pasha, where M. Cambon, the French Ambassador, was coming to have a talk with us about Egyptian affairs.

This care with which the Sultan seemed to have arranged an interview for us with M. Cambon naturally caused us pleasure, as the exchange of views on a question of such political importance with one of the most distinguished diplomats of the day would doubtless throw light upon the matter, but at the same time I wanted to have some information in advance as to the real object of this meeting. Unfortunately the lateness of the hour left me no time to inform myself on the matter, and I had to go at once to Chakir Pasha's, who had received the same instructions as I had. We waited for the Ambassador until midnight, but he did not come. The next morning I went to the Palace to inform the Sultan of this fact, and he sent me word that he had been informed by M. Cambon late the previous evening that he could not be at the rendezvous; but as he (M. Cambon) was preparing another work on the Egyptian question, we should be asked to examine it together a little later. Some time after this, again a messenger from the Palace—a carpenter whom the Sultan sometimes employed to do these errands—came to Chakir Pasha and myself asking us for the documents we had on the Egyptian question. We handed them over, and this was the last we ever heard about the matter. Indirectly we learned that the Sultan having consulted the French and Russian Ambassadors, they had advised that the question should be placed before a court of arbitration.

If one considers it in a spirit of justice and impartiality, bearing in mind the vital interests of the Empire, the reign of Abd-ul-Hamid shows a series of incoherent acts and mischievous lines of policy, the consequences of which were disastrous alike to the Empire, to the East, and I may even say, to the world in general. But of all these political blunders, that which in my opinion was the most fatal of all was his conduct with regard to this serious Egyptian question. Egypt herself is worth an Empire. The political advantages and the titles and prestige which its possession assured to the Empire, and particularly to the Ottoman dynasty, were such that the descendants of Mahomet the Conqueror and of Selim the Great ought to have concentrated their whole policy on safeguarding their sovereign rights over this country, the real key to the world. The ancestors of Abd-ul-Hamid, who had consolidated their Empire by the acquisition of Asia Minor, which had already become partly Islamised, used the power which the Mussulman religion assured them to realise their vast ambitions, the conquest of Constantinople and the conversion of the Oriental Empire to Islam. The possession of Constantinople was the key to the Mussulman edifice. All the Mussulman sovereigns who had succeeded Mahomet had hankered after the titles and honours which the founder of Islam had reserved for the one who should conquer the city on the Bosphorus. In the *Hadiss* he had described such a one as the greatest of sovereigns, while his army would be the greatest of armies.

This title, precious and mighty as it was in itself, nevertheless required consecrating. Such consecration Sultan Selim obtained in conquering Egypt, and obtaining by this fact the transmission of the Caliphate to himself and his descendants. The successors of Selim, who considered the Mediterranean to be insufficiently great to hold the foundations of an Empire, wanted to extend their conquests beyond the ocean, and used Egypt as the base for their operations in the East. After that period it was again thanks to Egypt that they gained the support and aid of England, who had become mistress of the Orient, in the maintenance of the Empire.

In this momentous question Abd-ul-Hamid adopted a policy contrary not only to the real interests of the country, inasmuch as it alienated the more than friendly interest of England, which had been the real and only support of the Empire, but which was opposed to the very interests of the Caliphate to which he was so particularly attached from the very beginning of his reign and all through it. It may be interesting for the reader to know some of the details in order to judge the motives for so strange a policy. Abd-ul-Hamid did not hesitate to dismiss the Khedive Ismail Pasha, whose prodigality was bringing Egypt to ruin, but the favours he showered on the instigators of disorder in

Egypt were absolutely calculated to bring about a subversive movement. When Arabi Pasha's rising took place, instead of declaring him a rebel and interposing as Sovereign of the country to restore order, he hastened to send a marshal, who was both ambitious and fanatical, with an argosy of valuable presents, as also a fanatical sheikh, so that they should keep alive the zeal and courage of the organisers of disorder. Again, after the catastrophe of Alexandria, when England only asked for the despatch of Turkish troops to repress the rising, the Grand Vizier of the time. Abdurrahman Pasha, a man of little capacity politically, but upright and honourable, fell a victim to his patriotism, while the famous Ghazi Osman Pasha, the hero of Plevna, who begged to be sent to Egypt, if it were only at the head of a battalion, was set aside. Raghip Bey, the Sultan's Chamberlain and confidant, told me that when Osman Pasha was urging his views on the Sovereign, Abd-ul-Hamid called his first eunuch, Baram Aga, who was one of his intimate counsellors, and asked his opinion on the matter. The eunuch, after consulting a certain Spirachi, who claimed to have special knowledge owing to his alleged relations with a lady connected with the British Embassy, and who happened to be present, replied by shaking a particularly long forefinger at the Sultan, and exclaiming, "Never!—never!" Ghazi Osman Pasha's request was refused.

Events followed their natural course. England, deprived of the support of the Suzerain Court which she had asked for, suppressed Arabi's movement by her own efforts and occupied Cairo. When Lord Salisbury formed his Cabinet, he summoned Sir Henry Drummond-Wolff to London from Cairo, where he had been in the capacity of Commissary, and gave him the mission of concluding a convention with the Porte on the Egyptian question. At the Conference that ensued at Constantinople, the Sultan was represented by Kiamil Pasha and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Said Pasha. Sir Henry Drummond-Wolff's first question was whether the Sultan would consent to send a few battalions of the Turkish Army to support the Khedive. On the Sultan refusing this, Sir Henry tried to get permission to form a corps of Albanian volunteers for the Khedive's service. This request was also refused. After a great deal of discussion and negotiations, a convention was drawn up and signed by the delegates of the two Powers (February 2nd, 1887) which fixed the period of evacuation at three years' time, the English reserving to themselves the right to intervene after that period in case of insurrection or aggression of any sort in order to aid the Turkish troops to restore order, and in case it was impossible for the Turkish Government to send troops, they would do this work alone. This Convention, ratified by the Queen, was returned to Constantinople, to be exchanged for the document ratified by the Sultan. But Abd-ul-Hamid refused to give his signature. Sir Henry waited at Constantinople, but the Sultan could not make up his mind to ratify the Convention, which, it was argued, gave the British co-proprietary rights in Egypt. In vain Lord Salisbury sent two long telegrams to Constantinople pointing out that far from giving his country co-proprietary rights in Egypt, the Convention would be of the greatest help to Turkey. The letter which the French Ambassador of the time, the Comte de Montebello, handed to the Sultan, either on his own initiative or at the Sultan's request, shows the kind of political wirepulling that was taking place at this critical moment. As this letter is of great and exceptional importance both from its contents and its form, I make no excuse for inserting it here in full :—

"*June* 7/19, 1887.

"SIRE,

"The French Government is absolutely decided not to accept the situation which will result from the ratification of the Egyptian Convention. Should it be ratified, the

French Government will devote its attention to its own interests, which the rupture of the equilibrium in the Mediterranean would compromise, and with this object in view would take measures necessary to protect them. In the contrary case, that is to say, if Your Imperial Majesty does not ratify the said Convention, the French Ambassador is authorised by his Government to give Your Imperial Majesty the formal and categorical assurance that the French Government will protect and guarantee Your Majesty against the consequences, whatever they might be, that might result from the non-ratification in question.

"Consequently Your Imperial Majesty, being no longer open to any doubt in this matter, will not only give full satisfaction to the Mussulman population by not ratifying this arrangement, which causes you so much anxiety and trouble, but will in this way confirm and strengthen the old-established ties of friendship existing between your Empire and France.

"As the disinterested policy of France alone can protect the Ottoman Empire against the encroachments and the ambitious intentions of England, the maintenance of friendship with France should be considered by your Imperial Majesty as being of more advantage to you."

The very day that this letter was handed to the Sultan, M. Maximoff, the dragoman of the Russian Embassy, called at the Palace, and while he was making verbal remonstrances, as if he had been told to do so by his Government, Youssouf Riza Pasha, President of the Immigration Commission and Privy Councillor of the Sultan, threw himself at His Majesty's feet, saying, "Trample on me rather than sign this document." The Sultan asked for nothing better than to yield to these entreaties.

After the definite Imperial refusal, Lord Salisbury declared that there was no further need for a Convention, that Her Majesty's Government, having undertaken to reorganise Egypt and restore order by their own resources, considered themselves obliged to carry out this duty, and that so soon as the desired end had been attained, the British Army would be withdrawn. This declaration caused natural anxiety to the Grand Vizier and the Ministers, and they again took up the matter with the Sultan, trying to find a way of reopening negotiations with the Foreign Office. The Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, who was always worried by the seriousness of the situation created by this attitude of Great Britain, took advantage of every opportunity to urge on the Monarch the need of arriving at an understanding with the latter Power. It was just a year before His Majesty took it into his head to consult me about this Egyptian question, that Kiamil Pasha, in consequence of a conversation which the Turkish Ambassador in London had had with the Prime Minister, made another appeal to the Sultan. He suggested the idea of reopening negotiations with the Cabinet of St. James by asking the Kaiser to intervene, both as personal friend of the Sultan and as grandson of the Queen, with whom at this time he seemed to enjoy particular favour. The Sultan agreed that the question should be studied by the Council of Ministers, but on condition that the ex-Grand Vizier Said Pasha and Chakir Pasha should take part in the deliberations. This Cabinet Council met at the Palace, and were joined by the two confidants of His Majesty after they had had a long conversation with him. The motives they brought forward to oppose Kiamil Pasha's suggestion show the instructions which the Sultan had given them, and as the finding of the Cabinet Council was opposed to the views which they enunciated, the Sultan rejected it.

The Sultan's whole conduct in the handling of this grave and weighty matter showed that he had made up his mind that it should not be settled. We were always asking ourselves and each other what could be his reasons, as we could not admit that the Sultan's well-known strain of mysticism or his cunning could have any action in this question. I was forced by the evidence to attribute this mischievous obstinacy to the implacable hatred he felt against England. Believing that the two successive changes of reign had been carried out through the support of England, and knowing that that Power was greatly looked up to by the Mussulman element, he considered it necessary for his personal preservation to destroy British prestige, and no line of action seemed to him better adapted to this end than to represent England as the usurper in a purely Mussulman country. I think the present war[1] supplies the real key to this mystery. Abd-ul-Hamid was always boasting of the ascendancy he had gained in the Mussulman world thanks to his clear-sighted policy as Caliph and the efforts he had made ever since his reign began. It seemed to be his policy to do everything he could to preserve his neutrality until the day should arrive when the great European war which he believed to be inevitable should break out and it would be his turn to play a great rôle. We regarded these declarations at the time rather as fables intended to justify his weakness and lack of courage in his political acts, but the great war shows that everything had been settled long beforehand, and that what we believed to be fables was a conviction based upon a well-laid plan.

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[1] Written in 1917.

CHAPTER XIV

1892—1893

Receptions at the palace—The character of the Sultan—An evening at the Imperial Theatre—Appointment as Governor-General of Crete—Nominations that were never carried out—Railway questions in Asia Minor—My appointment to Tripoli—A remarkable *mise en scène*.

On returning home one evening from an excursion I had made outside the walls of the capital, I stopped at the Palace to find out whether there was anything new with regard to the Egyptian question, as to which (as stated in the last chapter) I had handed in my reports. I learned that an aide-de-camp of the Sultan had gone to my house to invite me to the Palace to take part in the prayer that same evening, which was a religious fête. I therefore stayed, and after dinner was taken to the large hall known as the Salle des Tchid kiosk, one of the pavilions of Yildiz. I was placed facing the Sultan, in order that during the prayer, which was very long, the Sultan should have the opportunity of examining my physiognomy and general appearance. It was Abd-ul-Hamid's habit thus to inspect first the photograph, and then from a distance the physiognomy of those whom he wished to receive and talk with.

After the prayer, the Sultan, standing by the door, greeted those who had been at the ceremony and who took leave of him, addressing an appropriate remark to each. To each sheikh His Majesty said, "Do not forget to pray for me. I need your prayers." When I reached him he kept me for a minute to say how highly satisfied he was with the services I had rendered in Asia and in Syria, and asked me to await his orders in an adjoining apartment. I passed into this room, under the guidance of a chamberlain, and a minute or two later was shown into a third, where after a short while the Chamberlain, Faik Bey, came in and informed me from the Sultan of my appointment as Governor-General of Crete, and asked me to come back to the Palace the next evening to see His Majesty and receive instructions. The official order for my nomination was sent the same evening to the Sublime Porte.

My first impression on hearing of this decision to appoint me Governor-General of Crete was that the Sultan wanted to use this as a pretext for not considering the Egyptian question any more. But the political importance of the island, and the flattering manner in which the appointment had been offered to me, cut short any observation I might have made. I accepted the post, and on the following evening I went to the Palace. After dinner I was conducted to the little theatre, where the Sultan received me in his box for a few minutes' conversation. When his sister, Djemilé Sultane, the widow of Damat Mahmoud Pasha, who met with a tragic death along with Midhat Pasha at Tahif, was announced, the Sultan gave me leave to retire, inviting me at the same time to stay and witness the performance. I therefore spent the rest of the evening in the box occupied by the Marshal of the Court and other dignitaries of the Palace. This pretty little theatre possessed three rows of boxes ; there was a large one opposite the stage with a *grille* for the Sultan, and others on either side—on the right hand for the staff of the Palace, and on the left, which one also had a *grille*, for the harem.

During the entire performance the Sultan laughed and talked so loudly and with such ostentation that one might have been excused for wondering if it were he or the actors who were trying to attract the attention of the audience. In contrast with his behaviour, the box devoted to the ladies of the harem remained in profound and dismal silence.

The Sultan's object was evidently to affect a gaiety which would impress those present, and especially his sister. On all such occasions he either had or affected to have great mastery over himself ; concealing any preoccupation or emotion that he might be supposed to have, he did his best to astonish those around him by his gaiety and good-humour. Even at the most tragic moments of his career, he would appear in public "made up" to show that he was in good health and free from care. It often happened that when a Minister came to discuss grave State business with him, he would keep him occupied in idle talk about the mechanism of a watch or a new plant, or some similar topic, when, pleading fatigue and the lateness of the hour, he would put off the discussion until another time. On occasions of serious crisis it was his habit to send for Ilias Bey, the Chief of the Wardrobe, and director of the Imperial Theatre, to discuss questions of the playhouse and of future productions with him, to order fresh plays or send him for specimens of stuffs for costumes.

Though such conduct partly arose from Abd-ul-Hamid's innate frivolity, it was also in part intentional in order to show his freedom from care. The theatre was a field of action in which he was able and eager to take measures against the dangers which he saw everywhere around him. He often took exception to a play or to a certain setting and became furious, thinking it contained some allusion to himself or his political acts. Thus on one occasion, when he was witnessing a play to which he had invited the ex-Khedive, Ismail Pasha, he was greatly angered by the performance of the evening, a famous play in which the captivity of a young girl was the *motif*. He reproached Ilias Bey bitterly for this choice, alleging that the play was directed against himself, and that the captive maiden was meant to represent his brother Murad. Ilias Bey denied any intention, and as his Imperial master persisted in his charges, asked to be relieved of his onerous post. The performance was stopped and the Sultan retired, alleging indisposition. But the next morning he appeared to have recovered from his ill-humour and suspicions, and, withdrawing his charges, he reinstated Ilias Bey. His interest in these matters was so great that the translations bureau at the Palace was kept busy almost exclusively in translating all sorts of romances and dramas dealing especially with police and political plots, and those he chose among them were produced at the little Imperial Theatre.

Summoned again to the Palace a day or two later to receive instructions, I was informed by the same Chamberlain, Faik Bey, on behalf of the Sultan, of the interest which His Majesty attached to the Island of Crete, and his hope that I should succeed in my mission.

Crete, though it had been the first of the Greek countries to take up arms against Turkish domination (in 1821), had nevertheless remained under the Turks after the constitution of the Kingdom of Greece. During the lengthy period that the administration of the island was in the hands of Mehemet Ali, Viceroy of Egypt, he succeeded in maintaining perfect order and an absolute harmony between the two religious elements, which was due to the capacity and uprightness of his two successive representatives, uncle and nephew, both Albanians. After the recall of the latter of these governors, Mustapha Naili Pasha, to Constantinople, risings among the Christian population of the island had been continuous, and had all been suppressed by armed force. The Grand Vizier, Aali Pasha, was the first to find a way of solving this unfortunate Cretan question by granting a measure of self-government to the people. After the revolutionary movement in 1867 he went to the island in person to promulgate the organic law, which, converted later into a pact by the engagements of Aleppo, was recognised and guaranteed by the Powers and constituted the common law of the island. During the period that this charter of the people was respected, comparative calm reigned. But the Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid, who was so hostile to a constitutional régime that he suppressed the constitution he had himself granted to the Empire, having no desire to make an exception in favour of the Cretans, suspended the operation of this organic law. This cynical disregard of the engagements entered into by the Sublime Porte only too well justified the risings which had followed and continued in the island ever since. It was in consequence of one of these risings and of an attempt against the life of the Governor, Mahmoud Jellaladin Pasha, that the Sultan appointed me Governor-General.

There were but two ways of maintaining order in the island of Crete. One was to return to legal methods and respect the engagements entered into by the Government with regard to an autonomous administration of the island ; the other way was to govern with an armed force. The Sultan, while he would not adopt a liberal policy with regard to the Cretans, on the other hand, as he feared the massing of forces in the stations of the Mediterranean, whence it seemed to him possible to march on to Constantinople, should these happen to be led by a bold and resolute man disposed to try a *coup de main*, was very loth to adopt measures of repression by force, which would necessitate the concentration of troops.

Torn between these two fears, which were equally ominous to him, the Sultan tried to find a golden mean, and so his first recommendation to me through Faik Bey was that I should not ask for an increase in the number of troops occupying the different parts of the island.

My answer was to assure His Majesty that I should not ask for extra troops for Crete, and that I might even succeed in decreasing the number already there, but that I wished to be furnished with the moral force which was in my opinion of more efficacy than that of an army, and that was to return to the legitimate order of things by respecting the pact of Aleppo. But this, as I have said, did not suit the Sovereign, and as the first step that would have had to be taken on this path was to convoke the general assembly, the Sultan replied that it was inadvisable to run the risk of arousing difficulties and dangers with such an assembly, in which would certainly be found excited delegates who would clamour for annexation to Greece. I did not try to discount these supposed dangers, nor to insist upon my own views, but gave His Majesty to understand that it would be preferable to support a Parliamentary controversy rather than, by continuing in the path of outraging Cretan liberties, force the population to follow the extremists in armed rebellion.

Evidently my views were not to His Majesty's taste, and during the course of the same week, using as an excuse a speech that had been made by Mr. Gladstone, then Prime Minister, on the subject of Crete, the Sultan sent word to me that he considered it better that I should put off my departure for Crete until the spring. I was called to the Palace, where Arif Bey informed me of this desire of his Imperial master, to which I agreed.

The Sultan continued to show marked amiability towards me. Some time after the above events, on my taking steps to obtain the salary due to me as a retired official, he sent word to me that he did not wish me to apply in this matter officially to the Porte or the Minister of Finances, but that he himself would undertake to supply me with the necessary sums. Saying this, Hadji Ali Bey, the Chamberlain, handed me a silk purse containing a sum of money, adding that His Majesty would continue in the future to pay me similar sums periodically. While returning assurances of my thanks to the Sultan for his generosity, I refused the offer, and said I preferred to content myself with the small amount of the retired pay due to me by virtue of the regulations.

Towards the end of the year 1892, M. Kaulla, the German concessionnaire of the railway lines from Eskichehir to Angkora (the Anatolian Railway), came to ask for concessions for the prolongation of his lines, on one side as far as Konia and on the other to Cæsarea, and eventually as far as Diarbekir and Bagdad. This request, followed very quickly by a similar request from Nagelmackers, with regard to the modification of his original concession of a line from Banderma to Karahissar and Konia, gave rise to an absolute " hunt " for railway lines in Turkey. The Germans maintained the original condition they had made of a guarantee per kilometre of about 14,000 frs. (£560) for the lines to be laid down, though they had reduced this figure by several hundred francs; they furthermore demanded the right to establish colonies in the different centres on the line. Nagelmackers, who on the contrary alleged that he had not been able to procure the necessary capital to fulfil his undertakings made for the first convention, claimed a kilometric guarantee of 18,000 frs. (£720), whereas by the agreement that had already been come to, the State had only accorded him a right to 13,000 frs. (£520), and simply for the portion from Banderma to Oushak.

A group of French financiers, represented by Joseph Moutran Bey, asked for a concession for a line running parallel to the sea in Syria with a guarantee of 12,000 frs. (£480) per kilometre. The English company of the Aiden railway, which had already solicited the right to prolong its line, presented a request for the construction of the projected line, but asked for no guarantee.

All these demands, presented with more or less onerous conditions, constituted an economic and political danger for the future of the Empire. I could not remain a passive spectator when a matter of such vital importance was being discussed.

I already knew the disposition of the Sultan. He had made up his mind to accept any sacrifice to please the Emperor of Germany, and I realised that he would not hesitate to satisfy the German petitioners, and would put aside any difficulties to the realisation of German aims.

I presented a long memorandum to the Sultan, in which I pointed out first the disadvantage of a system of kilometric guarantees, and then the disadvantages of each separate petition. It was not difficult to show the defects of the system of kilometric guarantees, which obliged the State to complete the receipts up to the amount guaranteed, so that it was to the interest of the concessionnaire company to have small receipts and a minimum of working expenses, the supplement of the State guarantee received being thus pure profit. For example, the Anatolian Railway Company, which had a guarantee of 15,000 frs. (£600) for the lines working, and would have one of £560 for those still to be laid down, by reducing to the lowest possible minimum the expenses of working, could restrict the traffic to the detriment of the country served by the line. As proof of my assertions, I cited the case of the Aiden Railway, of which the company was English, which, having no kilometric guarantee, had had receipts of over 17,000 frs. gross per kilometre, while the others never took more than 4,000 frs.

Of all these competitors, the conditions offered by the representatives of the Aiden Railway Company were the most advantageous and the most honest. Mr. Purser, the director of this line, had drawn up his request in duplicate for the Sultan and the Grand Vizier in my presence, and submitted the documents in person at the Palace and the Sublime Porte. He undertook, as soon as the concession was accorded, to build a line leaving Alachehir and ending at Konia, via Oushak and Karahissar, and another junction line with the Anatolian line, leaving Karahissar to join the Anatolian line either at Kutahia—in case the Anatolian Company wanted to enjoy their preferential right to prolong the Eskichehir line as far as this place (Kutahia)—or as far as Eskichehir, in case the Germans renounced their prerogative. The Aiden Company not only asked for no guarantee per kilometre for their lines, but even offered to give up all claims they had on the Government on account of different advances they had made, as well as the indemnities due to them, amounting to several million pounds sterling. The company also undertook to redeem the Cassaba line, according to the desire of the Turkish Government.

Had these conditions been accepted, the Government would have made an annual economy of at least 5,500,000 frs. As a matter of fact, as the State had undertaken to pay the two concessionnaire companies the respective guarantees of 14,000 frs. and 18,000 frs. per kilometre for the 444 kilometres to Konia and the 252 kilometres of the prolongation to Cassaba, I reckoned that for the first there would be 6,000 frs. to pay per kilometre, and for the second 12,000 frs. The railway statistics since these lines have been working have shown that my prevision fell short of the facts. It was an immense sacrifice for the State, and for this reason I had had hopes that the English request would be received amiably even if not gratefully. Unfortunately the Sultan's friendship for the Kaiser was such that this price did not count with him. Seeing that Mr. Purser's request was not taken into consideration, and that the Minister of Public Works went on with the granting of the concessions to the Anatolian Company and to Nagelmackers, I presented another memorandum to the Sultan, pointing out the huge sacrifice he was imposing on the country.

The Sultan knew well enough my sentiments with regard to Great Britain, and the price I attached to the traditional friendship between Turkey and that Power. I did not want to go so far as to advise him to break with Germany in order to form an attachment with the rival Power, but I did not hesitate to say that if His Majesty had reasons for refusing all concessions for enterprises in

Turkey to the English, it was not proper for a Sovereign to sacrifice the material interests of his own country in order to pay court to the Sovereign of another country, that he would not win the latter's respect by so doing, and that it seemed to me that friendship at such a price must even lose its value in the eyes of the Kaiser. If His Majesty was really desirous of giving all preference to the subjects of his friend the Kaiser, he could take advantage of the offers that had been made him by the English to demand the same conditions from the Germans.

In spite of the justice of my patriotic suggestions, and in spite of the evidence of the prejudice which the conditions proposed by the competitors of the English company caused to the revenue, the agreement with the Germans was signed, and the onerous proposals of Nagelmackers were accepted, while the Syrian railway concession was also granted. If the Sultan made these absolute sacrifices, it was with the object of pleasing the Kaiser, while the other but not less important sacrifices made in the interest of Nagelmackers and Moutran, were to attenuate the effect which the larger ones would be likely to produce upon the public.

On the publication of the conventions and the estimates, I submitted a fresh memorandum to the Sultan so as to bring to his notice the political and economic disadvantages that would be caused by the clause regarding the colonisation of the colony traversed by this Anatolian line. The Sultan, at last deeply impressed by my arguments, summoned me and the Grand Vizier, Djevad Pasha, to the Palace the same evening to examine the question together. After reflection he decided to convoke a Cabinet Committee the next day to go into the whole matter, and I was ordered to take part in the deliberations. The next day this committee, consisting of the Grand Vizier, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Public Works, the Minister of Justice, and the Grand Master of Artillery, met at the Palace, where the Chamberlain, Arif Bey, introduced me and communicated the Sultan's order. I submitted my contentions to this committee, and explained the harm that would be caused to the population of the country by the settlement of Germans in property belonging to the company which would be exempt from all taxation. All the Ministers agreed with me, and recognised the need of modifying the convention which the Sultan had placed before us, with instructions to notify the changes which I thought necessary.

I was, however, struck by the coolness with which the Grand Vizier turned to me and said, "What objections have you to Germans settling in Anatolia?" I replied that if Germans settled under the conditions suggested beside the existing native towns and villages, these latter would not be able to compete against the foreigners, who would enjoy the double privilege of being foreigners and of being exempt from taxation. We should in that case soon have, side by side with the native villages, now reduced to misery, flourishing German settlements. "If that is all, I ask for nothing better," he said. I answered warmly that as a private individual he was free to wish what he liked, but that as the Grand Vizier it was quite impossible that he could desire such things to take place. While the Grand Vizier was having the *procès-verbal* drawn up, which was to be signed and presented to the Sultan, the Chamberlain Arif Bey came to tell the Grand Vizier that His Majesty thanked me for my patriotic act in pointing out the disadvantages which had been accepted, but which had escaped him, and that the Sultan undertook himself to get them remedied, by making representations direct to the company, or, if necessary, through the Ambassador, or even by appealing to the Emperor himself, and that there was therefore no need to draw up a *procès-verbal*. The colonisation, in fact, was never carried out.

The Anatolian Railway Company, after getting their concession, contented themselves with the Konia line, and gave up the project of the Cæsarea line, reserving to themselves the right to make other plans for the Bagdad Railway. While this was going on, a Mr. Stamforth came to Constantinople, as the representative of an English group, to apply for a concession for the Bagdad line. This line was to leave Scutari and pass by Bolu, Choroum, Sivas, and Diarbekir, and end at Bagdad, with a branch line going to Samsoun. Mr. Stamforth, having accepted an undertaking to lay down this line with capital obtained from half the additional tithes apportioned to the agricultural banks, and the taxes on roads and routes of the vilayets to be served by this line, the Sultan ordered me to make a study of the matter with the General Director of Agricultural Banks, Michael Portocal Effendi, later Michael Pasha, Minister of the Civil List. To my regret Michael Effendi did not share my view of the matter, and as the Sultan only sought for some pretext to reject all requests for concessions from the English, this petition was not accorded. Mr. Stamforth, after several months of fruitless negotiations, had to return to London, where a little while later he died.

As the uncertainty of my official position continued, and the political situation became more and more complicated, I deemed it advisable to give some thought to my personal affairs again. I had bought a small forest at Kermasti, in the vilayet of Broussa, and I had also obtained the right from the Minister of Mines and Forests to exploit the neighbouring forest of Dayama, belonging to the State. To arrange for the working of these two forests, and for the transport of the wood to the mouth of the Mickalitch, on the Sea of Marmora, it was necessary for me to make a journey to the spot. The difficulty was to obtain the Sultan's permission to make this trip. I had only to submit the request to be curtly refused. I was compelled to embark one night on board a small steamboat which I chartered to take me direct to the mouth of the Mickalitch.

We left Kadikuia at midnight, and about half-way across were assailed by a storm which threatened to sink the boat. After a few hours of struggle against the waves, which were enormous for such a small boat, we arrived at the island of Callimnos about dawn, wet to the skin. We rested that day and the next night in the little town, the inhabitants and the local authorities of which received us very hospitably. During my stay in the town of Kermasti, a charming and picturesque place which I had visited some years previously, an earthquake took place, which, luckily, though very terrifying, did not cause such material damage or loss of life in these regions as it did at Constantinople, which was the centre of the disturbance.

It was during my stay here that the news of the assassination of President Carnot arrived in Turkey, though the newspapers announced his death as being due to sudden natural causes, specified as a colic. The Sultan never allowed the press to publish news of political assassinations, and, whenever any such event occurred, it was represented as an ordinary sudden death. It was not until we received the European newspapers that we learned the real nature and details of this outrage.

On my return to Constantinople I continued to go to the Palace, where I received communications from the Sultan concerning the different political events that took place. A little time later the Chamberlain, Arif Bey, sent me a telegram containing the Imperial request to repair to the Palace at once. On my arrival, Arif Bey notified me smilingly that His Majesty had decided to change my career for me. He was going to give me the post of Ambassador at Teheran, and he asked me to submit to him in writing a statement that I should remain faithful and should cease to preserve feelings of admiration or to cherish attachment for the memory of Midhat Pasha.

The post of Ambassador, especially at Teheran, was not very attractive to me, but what shocked me most was this request for a written statement of the nature which I have indicated. It was the first time the Sultan had openly expressed the suspicions he entertained regarding me on account of my former relations with Midhat Pasha. I refused the request point-blank, and drew up a letter on the spot which I submitted to His Majesty through Arif Bey. In this I spoke of my former relations with Midhat Pasha, with whom I had had the happiness to work for the good of the State, to which the late Statesman was so devotedly attached. I continued to preserve my excellent memories of him, and, since he had now departed from this world, I begged the Sultan to leave the judgment of his acts to the Supreme Arbiter and to history.

It was quite in the Sultan's nature that his obstinacy should increase in face of the refusal which his offer met with.

The ex-Ambassador at Teheran, who was being transferred to Vienna, was at Constantinople, and an amusing incident occurred with regard to him just about this time. Meeting him one day at the Palace, he told me and some others that M. Cambon, the French Ambassador, had visited him since his arrival at the capital, and he had come to ask the Sultan for permission to return the visit. It seemed strange that M. Cambon should have spontaneously visited this Ambassador newly arrived from Persia, and I asked him if he had not previously called on M. Cambon. He replied emphatically in the negative. Continuing the conversation, I asked if he had yet paid a call on the Austrian Ambassador, and he assured me that he had done so. I soon realised what had happened. The naïve man, intending to visit the Austrian Ambassador, had by mistake paid his respects to the representative of France, and, although a conversation had taken place between them, he had not noticed his error. Acting on my advice, he at once hurried off to pay his visit to the Austrian Ambassador.

For three days I was pressed in all sorts of ways to accept this post, and elaborate promises were made to me from the Palace if I would do so. The Grand Vizier, Djevad Pasha, was also called upon to persuade me, but on the third day the Sultan accepted my refusal, and on going by invitation to the Grand Vizier's, I was able to inform him that the Sultan had stopped his insistence. This episode was not without its utility for me, since the Sultan, impressed by the way in which I had refused his offer and continued to defend the memory of Midhat Pasha, changed his attitude towards me.

He began to take an interest in me, and spontaneously gave orders that I should be given my retired pay, which had been in abeyance for over two years, and that it should date from the day of my departure from Beyrouth. This instruction gave rise to another incident. The regulations concerning these matters of retired pay required the decision of the Council of State, and, during the discussion of this body, an altercation took place between my cousin, Ferit Bey, later Pasha and Grand Vizier, and Izzet Bey, later Izzet Pasha, Chamberlain and Secretary to the Sultan, who were then both members of the Council. The former, although he was my cousin, opposed the payment of arrears to me as being contrary to the usages ; the latter was in favour of the payment. The dispute ended in a free fight, which naturally caused a great scandal. Two days later they were called to the Palace, where, after explanations, they became reconciled, and I received all the pay due to me for the two years, and regular monthly payments later. The vacant post at Teheran was filled by Halid Bey Baban, who had succeeded me at Beyrouth and was now Governor-General of Kastamounia.

The sad events that had taken place at Sassoun and in other parts inhabited by the Armenians served as a pretext for the Powers to unite on the question of reforms. About this time I was called one morning early to the Palace. I was received by the Chamberlain, Arif Bey, who handed me a document to read which consisted of the enumeration of a long series of reforms to be applied in Tripoli, written in pencil at the dictation of the Sultan himself. After I had read them, Arif Bey said to me, "Those are the Sultan's wishes for this important African country, which has for some time been engaging His Majesty's attention. He has decided to entrust you with full powers if you will undertake to apply these reforms literally, and in this way render a great service to His Majesty." I asked Arif Bey if it was the Sultan himself who had dictated these notes, which contained all that one could desire for the good of Tripoli. On his replying in the affirmative, I did not hesitate to agree to the Sultan's desire, and undertook punctually to carry out my duty in accepting this new post, on condition that I was given the full power that I had been promised. At the same time I begged Arif Bey to convey my congratulations to His Majesty, and to add the message, "If the Sultan has such a power of conception, why has he so long deprived his Empire of the benefit of it? The details of this project are just what we are all anxious for and what the country stands so much in need of."

Arif Bey, on his return from the Sultan, to whom he had carried my acceptance, set to work to put the notes in order in the form of instructions, while I on my side wrote a letter to the Sultan containing my thanks and a formal undertaking to carry out his wishes. The official order regarding my appointment was transmitted to the Sublime Porte, and the next day I received the Vizieral letter informing me of my appointment as Governor-General of Tripoli, as well as the instructions drawn up by His Majesty which I had accepted.

Being, as I was, by virtue of these instructions and the full powers given me, entrusted with the organisation and the civil, judicial, and military service of the country, which had up till then been administered on the old lines, and as I had to carry out all works of public utility, such as the port of the town of Tripoli, and a line of penetration into the interior of the country as far as the Sudan, as well as other important works, I gathered together a Government staff, consisting of persons competent and worthy of confidence. I presented the list of the persons of my choice, and it was accepted in its entirety by His Majesty, some of the persons being promoted in grade.

My nomination under the circumstances and these other appointments constituted an event very much out of the ordinary, which attracted a good deal of public attention. But there was not the slightest doubt it was all merely a spectacular *mise-en-scène* on the part of the Sultan. He had two ends in view. In the first place, he wanted to show the Powers that he was actually and seriously concerning himself with questions of reform. Secondly, he hoped, thereby, to offer a pledge of his good intentions as regarded Great Britain, of whose Eastern politics I was supposed to be a fervent partisan.

The affair also attracted the attention of M. Paul Cambon, who must have expressed a wish to know what it was all about for the Sultan to order me to go to the French Embassy and explain the nature of my mission in this country bordering on Algeria and Tunisia, with which the Tripolitan Government had to establish neighbourly relations. I paid this visit, accompanied by Munir Bey (later Munir Pasha, Ambassador at Paris), who at this time served as the intermediary of Abd-ul-Hamid in his personal communications with the French and Russian Embassies. The French Ambassador was satisfied with my explanations.

Having thus completed the appointment of my staff, and being ready to leave, one of the best boats of the Massoussé was placed at my disposal to take me to Tripoli. My family and the whole of the staff were on board. I then went to the Palace to present my respects and to take leave of the Sultan. But during the audience of His Majesty, he expressed his desire to retain me at Constantinople for some time longer in connection with Armenian affairs, and asked me what pretext I could make in order that the postponement of my departure might appear natural. I told him my wife was ill and ought to be cared for, and that this would therefore be no pretext, but a real reason for postponing my departure. It was impossible to delay the sailing of the vessel, as there were others on board outside of our party leaving for Tripoli. So my family was disembarked, and the ship sailed with the personnel and other travellers.

CHAPTER XV

THE ARMENIAN QUESTION

THE Eastern question, as it is called, however one regards it, always recalls to my mind the famous labyrinth of the fable with its Minos and Minotaur. Europe seems to be eternally condemned to contribute her human sacrifices to the solution of this problem, for ever since the Western nations adopted and crystallised the idea of the State, nearly all wars have had for their cause or effect the East. Europe's great difficulty is to find a Theseus to overcome the Minotaur. When that is done, an issue must be found out of the labyrinth, and, it seems to me, all this can only be brought about through the love of some Oriental Ariadne, to serve as guide and help.

The East, looked at from the ethnological point of view, contains different races, different peoples, different nations. When I say different nations, I mean such as have or have had a political existence and might still be capable of fulfilling their historical rights and duties. These facts and these distinctions have to be borne in mind at a time when millions of human beings are sacrificing themselves for ideas, and those who handle the destinies of humanity should know how to make the distinctions between all these peoples so as to establish an equitable distribution of justice.

In the first place, among all these peoples of the Orient are the Armenians, for whom I have an attachment not merely in the political sense, but from the humanitarian and personal points of view. I have all my life had the good fortune to count as my intimate friends men who were among the most distinguished of this race, such as the famous Patriarch of Constantinople, Kerimian, later the Catholikhos of Echmeyazin, the Patriarch Nerses, Odian Effendi, the most illustrious of the statesmen and collaborators of Midhat Pasha in his work of liberal reform, and numbers of others, through whom I was able to study the soul of the Armenians and gauge their intellectual and moral capacity.

I could never explain nor understand, any more than I could acquiesce in, the martyrdom suffered by this brave and hard-working people by any theory of the Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid's frenzy or caprice. Unfortunately, destiny, just as it persecutes individuals, also often persecutes peoples. History shows that this brave people have always been persecuted and massacred—in long past times by the Assyrians or the Persians, later by the Romans, the Greeks or the Arabs, the Mongols or the Seljukian Turks, or even by some fractions of their own numbers converted to one of the new religions, or who had returned to their own ancient faith. Even before the downfall of the Byzantine Empire and the rise of the Ottoman, the Armenians had ceased to be a kingdom, either as greater Armenia or later as smaller Armenia. But in relating the misfortunes of the Armenians, it should be borne in mind that, from the beginning of the Ottoman Empire until the time of Abd-ul-Hamid, they enjoyed a long period of relative peace. All this time the Armenians were living in peace and safety in all parts of the Empire, side by side with the Turks and other Mussulman inhabitants. This mutual confidence was based not only on affinity, but because the Armenians were in the eyes of the Turks a useful element in the economic life of the country, and, being already in possession of their national existence, they constituted no menace to the dominant race. I remember seeing at Kutahia a marble slab erected to record the act of Jacoub Tchélébi, of the family of the Ghermeyans, father-in-law of the Sultan Bayezid, and grandfather of the Sultan Mehmet I, who consecrated a portion of his annual revenues given for the furtherance of pious works, to the supplying of oil for the lamps of the Armenian church at Kutahia.

For this harmony between the Mussulman people and the Armenians, and the special benevolence extended to these latter by the Turkish Government, there were also specific reasons. The Government of the Sultans had always nurtured a certain suspicion of and reserve towards the Greeks and the Greek Patriarchate, which represented in their eyes the survival of the decayed Byzantine Empire. About the Armenians, on the other hand, there was nothing to inspire distrust or suspicion. Always considered the most faithful Christian subjects of the Empire, they were called the *Mileti sadika* (" the faithful people ").

When Turkey entered upon a course of civilisation and progress, the first Christians to enjoy the benefit of the new régime of equality were the Armenians. The first Christian Ministers and high dignitaries of the Porte were Armenians. During the times of Rechid, Fuad, and Aali Pashas, the Chancellery of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was almost continuously confided to Armenians; so was almost all the diplomatic correspondence. When, after the Crimean War, Turkish statesmen started to work for a Constitutional system (about 1860), they granted to the Armenian Church and community a régime based on a fundamental law which was intended as an experiment in constitutions and was to form a model for later use. Among those who worked in later years with Midhat Pasha at the establishment and working of the Ottoman Constitution, a large number were Armenian dignitaries. Among them Odian Effendi particularly distinguished himself. Even Abd-ul-Hamid continued to have Armenians as Ministers, particularly for the department of the Civil List.

It was not until 1893 that all was suddenly changed for the Armenians. The question arises why and in what manner did Abd-ul-Hamid undertake the extermination of an entire people by the organisation of wholesale and fearful massacres ? On what did he rely that he could dare to commit such acts without being in dread of Europe ? The facts as I knew and witnessed them at the time will enlighten the reader on these two points.

Abd-ul-Hamid, who had inherited from his forebears a spirit of Oriental absolutism, joined to elaborate cunning and refined hypocrisy, could see in those who surrounded him only enemies and conspirators. Haunted as he was by the fear of encountering the same fate as his two predecessors, every measure of cunning or violence which he could take against no matter whom, seemed to him to be an act of legitimate defence. Everything that had been accomplished in the way of reform or high politics during the time of his father and his predecessors he considered to be misfortunes for the dynasty and the Empire. He regarded the Western Powers, and especially Great Britain, who had helped towards the maintenance and the uplifting of the Ottoman Empire, as enemies from this very fact. He hated the statesmen of the past—even those who had aided to bring about his accession, because, working as they were for the consolidation of the Empire by the promulgation of laws that assured the union of the peoples and the advent of an era of justice and equality, they were all the time restricting his personal power. He did not hesitate to get rid of them one after another. But there still remained the nation, of which he could not get rid, and an absolute necessity in his eyes was to preserve the mass of the people from the contagion of liberal ideas and the desire to enjoy the happiness of liberal government.

As a matter of fact, the great mass of the Mussulman population, Turkish, Arab, Albanian or other, stationary as they had become through the régime to which they were subjected, and condemned for their intellectual development to follow the wishes and instruction which he imposed on them, did not give him much cause for anxiety. But it was a different matter with the Christians, who frequented the foreign educational establishments in the country, who travelled, and carried on constant relations with Europe and America, and he felt powerless to stay their evolution. In the Sultan's mind then, the Armenians, spread as they were all over the Empire and in close relationship with their Mussulman neighbours, whom they resembled in manners and customs, and whose language they spoke, were the only people in the Empire who might propagate liberal—and from his point of view, pernicious—ideas. The same Armenians who had been considered useful to the State by former liberal statesmen he now regarded as highly dangerous, and for the same reasons. The Armenian was the venomous snake whose head should be crushed.

If these were the chief reasons for the Sultan's hatred of the Armenians, there was also another powerful motive. Great Britain, as I have said, was his *bête noire*, and Great Britain had acquired the right, by the Treaty of Cyprus, to demand reforms in Asia Minor. As the Armenians were the most active of the inhabitants of Asia Minor, and as they had considerable commercial relations with Manchester and the other large industrial centres of Great Britain, they constituted, from this fact, a dangerous element in his eyes.

Having seen the reasons for the Monarch's hatred, one asks now how he obtained the courage necessary to carry out what he did ?

On the morrow of his accession, at the very moment that the fate of the Empire was being discussed at the Conference of the Admiralty at Constantinople, while the Ministers were struggling against Russian pretensions on the subject of Bulgaria and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Abd-ul-Hamid was carrying on underhand and secret negotiations with General Ignatieff and Count Zichy, the Russian and Austro-Hungarian Ambassadors respectively, offering to accept the arrangements come to between the two Emperors at Reichstadt, the only condition made being that these defenders of the principle of autocracy should promise to protect him against liberal reformers and innovators. After the Berlin Congress, when Bismarck had succeeded in imposing the Austro-Hungarian Alliance on his Imperial master, in spite of the comminatory letter of Alexander II, and the interview of the two Emperors at Alexandrowno, Oubrechef, the chief of the Russian *État Major*, and the confidential man of the most powerful Russian Minister of that time, Miljutin, came to Constantinople on a confidential mission from the Tsar. Prince Lobanov, the Russian Ambassador at the time, obtained a private audience with the Sultan for Oubrechef, at which neither the Minister for Foreign Affairs nor the First Interpreter of the Imperial Divan was present. At this *tête-à-tête* between the Sultan and the Tsar's envoy, a formal and secret understanding was concluded, by which the Sultan undertook to give up his right—that had been guaranteed by the Treaty of Berlin—to occupy militarily the Passes of the Balkans, while the Tsar undertook to defend the Sultan and his throne against all aggression from without and uprising within the Empire. It was the same Oubrechef who, about the same time, made advances to the Republic at Paris with a view to a Franco-Russian Alliance—advances which Bismarck maliciously divulged, remarking that France had "confessed" to Germany much as a faithful wife would confess to her husband gallant advances that had been made to her! Was Bismarck not also made aware of what had passed between the Tsar's emissary and the Sultan? The intimacy that followed between Abd-ul-Hamid and Berlin leaves little room for doubt on this matter, but Bismarck was evidently interested in keeping the secret of one of these advances while making known the other.

Abd-ul-Hamid showed himself really clever in this matter.

On the one hand, he was assured of the support promised by the Tsar, which, from his point of view, had the desired result; on the other hand, he made use of the fact to establish intimate relations with Berlin, although in this case the relations, as usual, were purely for the benefit of Berlin —he was working, as the French say, " pour le roi de Prusse."

Among the masses of the Armenian population, there were still some who preserved memories of the alluring promises made in the preceding centuries by Peter the Great, Catherine the Great, and Nicolas I, but the élite among this people were convinced rather that their national evolution should take place under the auspices of the Sultan. Strengthened and aided in this belief by persecution and arbitrary acts on the part of Russian Tsarism, they succeeded in making the whole population share their expectations. Russia's attitude had changed indeed since her conquest of the great portion of Armenia, and, whereas in Turkey the Armenian schools and churches enjoyed considerable liberty, and Armenian nationality was in favour, in Russia the Armenian was looked upon as a dissenter and a revolutionary, an enemy of the Tsar and of Orthodoxy. Tsarism had, by arbitrary methods and forced proselytism, sought to denationalise the Armenians and convert them to Orthodoxy. Even the rights of the Catholikhos of Echmeyazin were for some time contested. An agitation was in consequence started in Russia by revolutionary societies like the Hunchakists, who got into contact with their fellow-countrymen in Turkey with the object of defending their rights in Russia—though those in Turkey always protested their fidelity and gratitude towards that country.

This movement of nationalist unrest in the regions bordering on the frontier, and the action of the evangelical churches in the same direction, alarmed the unquiet spirit of the Sultan. At the first signal that came from Sassoun, the Sultan issued orders to take rigorous measures against the Armenians. The first result of this was the terrible massacres of Sassoun in 1894.

These massacres naturally aroused great indignation in Great Britain. The Embassy at Constantinople had to remonstrate and to demand an inquiry on the spot, and exemplary punishment for the authors of the criminal act. The Sultan, feeling sure of the help promised him from Russia, did all he could to resist the pressure from Great Britain. He accused the Armenians themselves of revolting, and complained that the British Government permitted the Hunchakists to stay and plot in that country, their leader, Naza Bek, being in London and in constant contact with the Nihilists there. Sir Philip Currie persisted, and sent his military attaché and the consul to Sassoun to make an inquiry into the massacres. The Sultan, in fright, sent for Kiamil Pasha, the ex-Grand Vizier, one night, and instructed him to go to the Ambassador and explain to him that the Sultan had given no order to massacre, but to put down the revolt by legal methods. If there had been excess, it was the fault of the First Secretary in drawing up the telegraphic order given to the Commander of the Fourth Army Corps. Kiamil Pasha was also instructed —as the Sultan did not wish that the inquiry should be solely under British auspices—to tell Sir Philip that His Majesty wished that representatives of the Russian and French Embassies should accompany the British Attaché, and also that he wanted to have a high court of justice established to consider finally the cases of those condemned by the local tribunal.

The Sultan rejected all the British demands, feeling himself strong in the support of Russia, promised by the Tsar and guaranteed by the presence of Prince Lobanov, the depositary of this secret pact, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Nevertheless, in order to create a diversion, Abd-ul-Hamid promised reforms—general and radical reforms—at once. It was during this struggle that the

Sultan was carrying on against the necessity of making reforms that my nomination as Governor-General of Tripoli took place, as narrated in another chapter. The morning after the Sultan told me to postpone my departure for this post, as he wanted me in connection with Armenian questions, Sir Adam Block, the First Dragoman of the British Embassy, came to see me, and showed me a programme of Armenian reforms that had been drawn up by the three Ambassadors.

But the Sultan, either convinced that Russia would never permit such a policy in favour of the Armenians, or because he was ill-informed by Munir Bey, his intermediary with the two Ambassadors, continued to feel himself safe from the Powers on the question of these reforms. On the occasion of a visit I paid to Sir Philip Currie, the Ambassador, willing to preserve the prestige of the Ottoman throne, and desirous of nothing better than that the Sultan should return to the path laid out by his predecessor, told me he would be pleased if I could succeed in making Abd-ul-Hamid understand that it would be in his own interests as Sultan if he would himself take the initiative and not leave it to the Ambassadors to be obliged to force upon him this programme of reforms, of which I had seen a copy.

Accordingly, on leaving the Embassy, I went direct to the Palace, and submitted Sir Philip's suggestion to the Sultan in writing. Abd-ul-Hamid, worried, at once sent for Munir Bey and questioned him, but the latter repeated the assurances he had already given His Majesty. Thereupon the Sultan told me it was very "naïve" of me to believe what the Ambassador told me, because Sir Philip Currie's desire was to use me as an instrument to intimidate him (the Sultan) and make him do things which the Ambassador would never dare to propose himself. I expressed my regret at the Sultan's credulity, and assured him that four days later the Note would be officially presented. The Note was, indeed, presented on the day I had predicted, and the result was to make His Majesty very angry with Munir Bey.

The Grand Vizier at this period was Djevad Pasha, a man who had risen in the space of four or five years from being a simple officer and aide-de-camp of the Sultan to be a Marshal and Governor-General of Crete, whence he came to Constantinople as Grand Vizier. This Grand Vizier's ambition was to be a soldier always rather than a statesman. On the occasion of his first reception of the Diplomatic Corps, in reply to the political agent of Bulgaria, M. Grecoff, who expressed a hope that the policy towards the Principality would remain the same as before, the Grand Vizier said that he had no opinions of his own to express, and that as a simple soldier his only duty was to carry out the orders of his master! He was faithful throughout his political career to this principle until the day when he yielded his position to Said Pasha, during whose term of office the negotiations on the Armenian reforms assumed an acute phase.

The Sultan vehemently resisted the representations of the Powers, which I must say were presented in a very curious form. The Foreign Office and the British Ambassador followed a straight and unwavering policy, but it was different with France and Russia. The Ambassador of the latter Power, Prince Lobanov, faithful to his engagements and the political interest of his country, continued to reject any proposals for Armenian reforms. Opposed on principle to considering the claims of Oriental peoples, he especially opposed reforms in a country and for a people whom Russia would never have allowed to become a State—a second Bulgaria—on the flank of the Empire. M. Hanotaux, the French Minister, who had recollections of his own stay in Constantinople as Councillor of Embassy, and later as Chargé d'Affaires, and who had preserved a feeling of respect and admiration for Abd-ul-Hamid, while desirous of being agreeable, was, on the other hand, intent on strengthening the alliance with Russia, and therefore of associating himself with the political views of his colleague Lobanov. The Ambassadors of these two Powers, obliged to consider the guiding policy of their chiefs at home, were, however, impressed by what they had seen on the spot, and could ill sacrifice their feelings of humanity in favour of a people whose terrible tribulations they had witnessed.

All the Sultan's animosity, then, was reserved for Sir Philip Currie, and he was supported in these sentiments by his Ministers, especially by those who considered it their chief duty to minister to the Monarch's caprices and foster his antipathies for their own purposes.

I remember an amusing little incident which will show the feeling that reigned at this time. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the presence of a number of official personages, in the room of the First Chamberlain of the Palace, related to Hadji Ali Bey (with the intention, of course, that it should be carried to the Sultan) a dream he said he had had, in which, while quarrelling with the Armenian Patriarch, he had seized Sir Philip Currie by the throat and thrown him to the ground. We were amused at the recital, but it may be that the Minister, who had formerly been Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin, remembered a dream of the German Emperor William I, of which that monarch, very much impressed, gave a detailed account in a letter to Bismarck, and as the Sultan had not had such a dream, the Minister for Foreign Affairs thought he would oblige by having it himself.

An alternative scheme of Armenian reforms was now presented by the Sultan, which, though it bore all the appearance of extending the benefits of reform to the whole Empire, in truth contained no practical reform at all. At the same time, the Sultan, remembering that he had reserved the post for me, informed me of his intention of appointing Marshal Chakir Pasha, an old friend of mine, who was also bound to me by ties of relationship, as High Commissary for the Armenian inquiry, and to apply the measures that had been decided upon. I highly approved the choice, as I knew Chakir Pasha's qualities, and it was my pleasant duty to inform my friend of his appointment before he received his official nomination. Chakir Pasha had for a long time been the Sultan's Ambassador at Petrograd, where he had acquired the confidence and personal good-will of the Tsar, so that his appointment had the advantage of being agreeable to the Russian Cabinet.

The Sultan, who was very much irritated at my insistance upon reforms that had been already adopted *en principe*, and, above all, at the project I had recently presented to him, called me one day to the Palace, and, leaving the Council of Ministers who were assembled in one of the salons to wait for him, did his best to try to dissuade me from the liberal ideas with which my acts and communications to him were inspired. His Majesty expressed the regret that I had not properly studied the history of the Empire, and insisted that all its misfortunes arose from his father's having submitted to the Charter (the *Tanzimat*) which Rechid Pasha, strongly supported by Great Britain, had promulgated. According to the Sultan, Rechid Pasha was as great an enemy of the Empire and of the dynasty as Great Britain herself. In reply I could only point out to His Majesty that it was regrettable that he himself had studied the history of his Empire wrongly. If Turkey, from being in the position of a mere tribe, had succeeded in becoming a great State, and in taking a place in the Concert of European Powers, it was thanks to the Charter which his father had promulgated on the advice of its author, Rechid Pasha, with the support of the British Cabinet. Furthermore, I begged His Majesty to postpone this discussion to another time, and to give his whole attention to the discussions of the Council of Ministers with regard to the burning question, which was that of the Armenians.

In the meanwhile the report on the result of the inquiry made at Moush had arrived at Constantinople, but in spite of the repeated promises of the Sultan to carry out reforms, it was not followed up. The Armenians of Constantinople, becoming exasperated, sent to the Palace, to the Porte, and to the Ambassadors a circular announcing their intention of holding a pacific demonstration before the Porte and the Palace (on September 30th, 1895) in order to give voice to their desiderata. The Armenian Patriarch, foreseeing and fearing the consequences of such a demonstration, did all he could to prevent it, but in vain. The Porte, which had the right, and whose duty even it was, having learned their intention, to send for the Armenian leaders, to ask them to present their desiderata in another form, and to forbid the demonstration, not only did nothing at all in the matter, but by its attitude rather provoked the demonstration, with the evident object of profiting by it in order to take repressive measures against the demonstrators. Soldiers were posted in position, and people armed with cudgels took up positions hidden behind them. When the demonstrators were prevented from approaching the Sublime Porte, a struggle took place, and as the result of a shot, fired it was not known whence or how, which wounded an officer, an attack of a most ferocious description on the Armenian demonstrators as well as on the population in general at once took place.

A general panic seized the population, and similar massacres took place all over the country and in Asia Minor. The Ambassadors came down the Bosphorus and presented a joint Note, signed by their doyen (the representative of Austria-Hungary), pointing out the gravity of the events and demanding that efficacious measures be taken to prevent the recurrence of such acts. A day or two later the Armenian population at Constantinople, feeling themselves continually menaced, took refuge in the churches, where they locked themselves in, declaring their intention to die of hunger rather than be butchered. The situation became exceedingly grave. Said Pasha was discharged from office, and Kiamil Pasha was appointed Grand Vizier. I tried to persuade the Sultan to agree to the application of the fundamental laws or charters of the country, and the carrying out of the organic laws in the provinces. Sir Philip Currie, in the name of his Government, insisted that the Empire should return to the old form of government from the Porte, with an independent Ministry responsible for its acts. Thereupon the Sultan summoned Kiamil Pasha, and told him he had decided to carry out this latter recommendation and form a responsible Ministry, with himself as Grand Vizier.

Kiamil Pasha, convinced of the sincerity of the Sultan's declarations, the same evening handed to His Majesty a formal programme of this proposal. To his surprise, this greatly angered the Sultan, who, since their last interview, had apparently entirely changed his mind, and had already decided on getting rid of Kiamil Pasha. Abd-ul-Hamid, having by his actions and by his methods of governing the country caused so much misery and unhappiness, and having lost the confidence of his people, was now seeking to regain this by the increase of his prestige as Caliph. The methods employed in this policy were to attribute all the misfortunes of Turkey to Great Britain, and the instruments he made use of in this so-called Pan-Islamic policy were several sheiks—Arabs, or rather Syrians, the most influential and active of whom was one Ebul-Houda. As the campaign was going to assume more extended proportions, he had just had the idea of adding to the number the Syrian, Izzet Bey, later Izzet Pasha, whom the Sultan considered capable of playing an important political rôle. As Ebul-Houda, Izzet Bey, and their acolytes were by principle enemies of Kiamil Pasha, they had several days before the presentation of this programme of the new Ministry persuaded the Sultan of the necessity of retiring Kiamil

Pasha. The programme was made the excuse, and Kiamil Pasha ceased to be Grand Vizier after only thirty-five days of office. He was replaced by Rifaat Pasha, the Minister of the Interior, whose rôle in the Cabinet of Kiamil had consisted simply in carrying to the Sultan reports of everything that was discussed and decided at the Council of Ministers. His utter lack of capacity made it plain that there was no hope of any administrative or political measure being realised while he retained office.

Chakir Pasha, as High Commissioner, accompanied by a numerous staff, had already left for the Asia Minor provinces. He set himself to the task of applying the reforms contained in the programme of the Sultan—which had not been published. Nevertheless, no improvement nor pacification took place. The massacres in the provinces continued, and the Armenians of Constantinople, living in a state of the greatest anxiety and fear, still shut themselves up in the churches every Friday, the day of the Selamlik. The Cabinet had come almost entirely to take no further notice of the matter, but the Ambassadors at Constantinople considered themselves obliged to try and find a remedy for this shocking state of affairs.

M. de Nelidoff, the Russian Ambassador, conceived the idea of doubling the *stationnaires* which each Ambassador had a right to have at Constantinople, and of disembarking a contingent of troops from each. This proposal was adopted by the Powers and communicated to the Sultan. His Majesty, whose habit it was to begin by resisting any proposal, this time saw a real danger for himself in the measure proposed by the Powers. The possible appearance of warships before Constantinople gave him good reason to fear a rising in the capital. An autograph letter from the Tsar recommending this same measure deprived him of all hope of help from Russia, whose attitude up to then had been his only comfort. At this juncture an aide-de-camp came to fetch me one night to go to the Palace. On my arrival I found the Sultan completely transformed. He seemed to be convinced that there was nothing more to hope from Russia, and that Great Britain alone could ensure him salvation. Being now desirous of accepting all the reforms recommended, so long as the warships did not come to Constantinople, he ordered me to go to the British Embassy at Pera to make this arrangement. Although it seemed to me extremely late, I drew up on a piece of paper with a pencil the principal points of the reforms to be applied. They consisted in the formation of a Cabinet of Ministers, given the task by a *Hatt* (or Imperial Rescript) of governing the country on their own responsibility, and convoking a constituent assembly for the revision of the Constitution, which was to be brought into harmony with the needs of the time and the new situation of the Empire, occasioned by events since the proclamation of the Constitution. I was authorised to undertake with the Embassy, in the name of the Sultan, the application of these measures, and to ask for the postponement of the arrival of the warships until the next day, when this Rescript would have appeared and the Cabinet would be formed.

Unfortunately, Sir Philip Currie was at that moment *en route* on his return from London, where he had been on leave. Sir Michael Herbert (afterwards Ambassador at Washington) was Chargé d'Affaires, but I did not know him personally. At midnight I went to the house of Sir Adam Block, the First Dragoman, and together we went to the Embassy, where Sir Michael Herbert, roused from his bed, received us. We had a long conversation, which, unfortunately, bore no fruit. I tried my utmost to persuade the Chargé d'Affaires that it was a unique occasion to profit by the Sultan's disposal to grant what would never be obtained from him in other circumstances, which would assure real government to the country and establish order throughout. It seemed to me that this time there was no danger in believing in the Sultan's sincerity. If the next day His Majesty's decision was actually realised, the result would be far and above all the advantages one could hope to obtain from the presence of five warships before the Golden Horn. But Sir Michael Herbert could not make up his mind to submit the matter immediately and confidentially to Lord Salisbury.

In face of this obstinacy, I then advised Sir Michael, no longer as the Sultan's messenger, but in my private capacity as a patriot, to allow the whole fleet, which was then at Lemnos, to enter Constantinople harbour and force on the Sultan the will of Great Britain, whose only desire was salvation for the Empire and peace for her people. But after five hours of conversation I was compelled to return to the Palace and announce that my mission had failed. Thus, through the lack of decision of this diplomat, once more a great opportunity was lost for Turkey.

Deeply did I regret the absence of Sir Philip Currie. If he had been at Constantinople at this time, this opportunity would not have been lost, and the affairs of the East would have taken on an entirely different aspect for the good of everyone. But there is a fatality in events which cannot be avoided—they take the course prescribed by destiny. The vessels arrived, and the Sultan's apprehensions were not realised. But in spite of the warships, the massacres continued, and Europe thought no more of them.

Everyone believed there was no Armenia left, but the Armenians insisted on proving that they existed, and I really think the Sultan also wished to have Armenians in order that he might suppress them.

In the month of August some twenty Armenian revolutionaries arrived at Constantinople, and at high noon, armed with revolvers and bombs, entered the Ottoman Bank, which they threatened to blow up if they were not supplied with *sauf-conduits* to leave Constantinople in safety. The Ambassadors intervened, the *sauf-conduits* were given, and the revolutionaries, accompanied by the dragomans of the Embassies, were taken on board the yacht of Sir Edgar Vincent, General Director of the Ottoman Bank, whence, after a magnificent feast, they departed. The next day the massacres recommenced all over Constantinople, and lasted three days.

It is indeed difficult to explain this enigma : how was it that, at a time when no one could enter Constantinople without being examined and authorised, twenty revolutionaries succeeded in coming into the capital, in walking in broad daylight through the busiest streets, and entering the bank, which was guarded by military ? How is it that after this affair thousands of the lower classes of the population were in the streets armed with cudgels, intent on massacring the innocent population ? How is it that the same day the man who most enjoyed the Sultan's confidence hurried to withdraw his own balance at the bank ? One does not dare believe in a diabolical connivance, but in any case I consider the audacity of the twenty men who planned this coup as criminal as the reprisals taken on the Armenians.

The Sultan's Palace, which was justly considered to be the heart of the evil genius of the Empire, where Abd-ul-Hamid concentrated all his autocratic power, and whence, with extraordinary energy, he directed all the administrative wheels of this immense country, had the advantage also of being the rendezvous of all the best minds of the Empire. Many a functionary and official exchanged views on the country's politics with extraordinary frankness, giving free vent to criticisms such as one imagines are only to be heard in Liberal countries. Besides those who surrounded the great Master with the incense of ridiculous flattery, there were others who did not hesitate to criticise with severity not only the acts of the Ministers, but even those of the Monarch himself.

The Armenian massacres and other troubles in the Empire combined to cause the greatest distress, and occupied the minds of many of the highest persons attached to the service of the Sultan; and I must say, Abd-ul-Hamid permitted observations and criticisms to be made to him, even in a disagreeable manner, that few Sovereigns or Ministers of Liberal countries would have allowed. After a series of conversations and a thorough study of all the means that might be adopted to stop this evil that was threatening the existence of the Empire, some of us resolved to make a collective appeal to the Sultan to force him to change his system, which was so universally condemned. I suggested to Ghazi Osman Pasha, Marshal of the Court, to my friend Marshal Chakir Pasha and Marshal Dervish Pasha, all three general aides-de-camp of the Sultan and military and political councillors, the idea of forming a group of ten political persons, both Mussulman and Christian, who would ask an audience of the Sultan, in order to present our complaints to him in person and lay before him a programme of suggested reforms, the general lines of which we had decided upon. Having obtained an audience of His Majesty, they would make him understand that they were determined not to leave the Palace until they had obtained his consent to the reforms, or would accept exile in case of his refusal. I was surprised to find that Dervish Pasha, to whom we had not hitherto attributed sentiments of this kind, was in the present case all enthusiasm for this. Osman Pasha, whose patriotism was undoubted, hesitated, and told us he did not believe such an effort would be successful. My great friend, Musurus Bey Ghikis, then Councillor of State and later Minister in the Cabinet of Kiamil Pasha, showed all the activity inspired by a high sense of patriotism. One day he and I went up the Upper Bosphorus to discuss some details of the plan with Sahib Moulla, one of the most distinguished Ulemas of the country, who later became Sheik-ul-Islam. Unfortunately, the whole project was stopped by the faith which this excellent Ulema attached to a ridiculous prophecy, according to which something important was going to happen in the month of Chabanne (still three months off), in which the Sultan's birthday fell, and which would render our efforts unnecessary, so that he insisted we must wait. Musurus Bey and I were doubly disappointed at this, not only on account of the fact itself, but on account of the credulity of a man in whom the country placed great hopes.

CHAPTER XVI

1897—1900

My memorial to the Sultan—The Cretan Question—War with Greece—My Liberal newspaper, and the Sultan's hostility to it—Experiences as Conseiller d'État—Struggles with the Sultan—Lord Rosebery's visit—Unpleasant experiences—The Turks and the Transvaal War—Decision to exile me—Relations with the throne more and more strained—Second appointment as Governor-General of Tripoli—My departure from Constantinople.

I had to go to Eski-Shehir in connection with the work of exploitation of a meerschaum mine of which I had been proprietor since my exile in that place. When I announced my desire to go, and asked for the Sultan's permission, Izzet Bey came to tell me, on behalf of His Majesty, that as the Sultan wanted to have a conversation with me during the course of the week, it would be impossible for me to leave the capital. Despite this order I went. On my return I called at the Palace to report myself and express the pleasure I had had at seeing this country so completely transformed, thanks to the railway, which had been the work of His Majesty. The Sultan, who had forgotten, or pretended to have forgotten, that he had refused permission for me to go, thanked me, and asked me to present a memorial with regard to the progress I had seen in the interior of Asia Minor.

In spite of the force of resistance which the Sultan gathered from the favourable attitude of the St. Petersburg Cabinet, and the encouragement of some of the intimate counsellors with whom for some time past he had surrounded himself, he finally wavered before the complaints made by Great Britain, which were confirmed by the events in Europe and Armenia, and were justified by the pressing representations and appeals made by a number of patriots. It was about this time that I took it upon myself to submit to His Majesty a memorandum in the form of a *réquisitoire*.[1] The Sultan, greatly impressed, handed this document to Tewfik Pasha, who, transferred from the Embassy at Berlin to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, seemed to Abd-ul-Hamid to be the representative and defender of the policy of his friend the Kaiser. But Tewfik Pasha, who was a man of enlightened patriotism, instead of disapproving the contents of my memorandum, recommended my suggestions discreetly but sincerely to His Majesty. Unfortunately, there came the Cretan affair (immediately after that of Armenia), which upset the relations between Turkey and Greece. War broke out between the two countries (in 1897), in spite of the Sultan's repugnance to extreme measures, and the reforms that seemed almost certain of being fulfilled were again postponed, to the grief of all good patriots. One could almost think this war was tolerated, if not indeed provoked, by the representatives of the Powers, who thought by that means to avenge themselves on the Sultan by embarrassing him; but the success of the Turkish Army was so prompt and decisive that the Sultan enjoyed a glory he did not deserve.

The initial operations on the frontier of Thessaly gave some little cause for anxiety in Turkey. The Generalissimo, Marshal Edhem Pasha, a brave and upright soldier, whose military capacity, however, was not up to the task he had assumed, found himself at first in great difficulties, and for three or four days the Palace and military circles in the capital remained anxiously waiting for news of military happenings. It was not even known where the Generalissimo was. The famous defender of Plevna, Ghazi

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[1] The text of this memorandum is given in an Appendix.

Osman Pasha, who, ever since his return from Russia, where he had been taken a prisoner of war, had remained as Marshal of the Court, insisted that the Sultan should send him to the front as generalissimo. His departure caused great enthusiasm among the population of the capital, who gave way to patriotic demonstrations such as Constantinople had not witnessed before during the reign of Sultan Hamid. The cheering and delight which accompanied the Marshal to his train were of a most enthusiastic description. The Sultan, who was afraid of all such popular outbursts, and who was jealous of the popularity of any of his subjects, whether a military or political man, at once became alarmed. Luckily for his apprehensions, the news of the first victory of the Turkish Army and the invasion of Thessaly arrived the very day after the Marshal's departure. Thereupon the Sultan immediately sent orders by telegraph to Marshal Osman to return at once and resume his duties at the Palace. Osman, who received these orders at Salonika, had nothing for it but to obey and return to the capital.

The campaign of Thessaly and the Epirus was simply a triumphal march for the Turkish Army, which could have got to Athens without the least difficulty if the Tsar had not stopped this by a telegram addressed to the Sultan himself, couched in flattering but peremptory terms. The armistice was concluded and negotiations were decided on for the definite conclusion of peace. Profiting by the happy occasion for the Sultan, I hastened to congratulate him, and to point out what an auspicious occasion it would be for him to take the initiative in the reforms, which would give more merit to His Majesty by proving that these reforms arose from his own goodwill without pressure from outside. At the same time I urged upon the Sultan that the armistice ought not to end or peace negotiations be opened until it was understood that the settlement of the Cretan question should be accepted as the basis of the treaty. But the Sultan, who had now for the second time become Ghazi (or Victorious), grew more presumptuous than ever, and the question of Crete, which had been the cause of and the reason for the war, in spite of all logic and in defiance of all the interests of the Empire, was not made the object of the peace negotiations.

The Tsar, partly from political reasons and partly as a sort of recompense to his cousin, Prince George of Greece, for the service he had rendered him at the time of the attack made upon him in Japan, proposed him as candidate for High Commissary of Crete. I combated this political idea of the Tsar's in a series of articles in my newspaper, *Medjra-Efkiar*, but the fatality of events was stronger than logic or the rights of Turkey. In spite of the Sultan's attitude to Great Britain, which was irritating, if not actually hostile, Lord Salisbury showed a real consideration for Turkey. When the unfortunate affair of Candia occurred (in September 1898), and Mohammedans, fanaticised and egged on no one knows by whom, were guilty of the abominable political crime of attacking the detachment of British troops and killing several of them, the news caused the utmost consternation in Constantinople. A few days later I went to the Embassy at Therapia to see Mr. de Bunsen, the Chargé d'Affaires, and express my regret at this grave event. I expected to find the Embassy extremely upset over the matter, but found they were not. After lunch Mr. de Bunsen showed me a letter he had just received from Lord Salisbury and a copy of a letter sent to the latter by Lord Cromer. Lord Cromer, in this letter, reported to the Foreign Office the complaints that Ghazi Hamed Moukhtar Pasha, the Turkish High Commissary in Egypt, had made with regard to the policy which was being manifested by England of abandoning Islamic and Turkish interests. Lord Salisbury informed the Embassy that British policy with regard to Turkey and Islam had in no way changed. As regarded the Cretan question, the British Cabinet had to examine the Tsar's proposal with regard to Prince George as a concrete proposition, but he asked for nothing better than to receive an alternative practical proposal from the Sovereign of the country, and added that Her Majesty's Government would examine such a suggestion with the utmost interest and sympathy.

Mr. de Bunsen asked me to make these views known to the Sultan. Going the same day to the Palace, I handed in a short note relating the facts of my conversation to the Sultan, and begging His Majesty to come to a decision in accordance with Lord Salisbury's suggestions, which were in the interest of the Empire. At the same time I pointed out to the Sultan that the choice of a Greek subject of the Empire as Commissary of Crete would be no real guarantee for the maintenance of the Sovereign's interest, as witness whereof was the case of Vigorides Aleko Pasha, who, although an Ottoman functionary, had not been able to prevent the annexation of Eastern Roumelia to Bulgaria. The Sultan's reply surprised and shocked me. He told me this Cretan question was a sore point for the Tsar, and that the Powers, not daring to be disagreeable to him, were trying to make use of him (the Sultan) as the instrument to irritate this sore. And all he did was to write an autograph letter to the Tsar asking him to agree to the appointment of an Ottoman Greek as Governor of Crete. As the Tsar refused this, and the Powers continued their pressure, the Sultan instructed the Council of Ministers to evacuate the island of Crete, and gave orders to the commander of the island to take measures accordingly.

The most curious part of the whole affair was the sequel. I was sent for at the Porte to go to the Palace, where the First Secretary told me the Sultan wished me to know that the Ministers, acting without his orders and in defiance of his expressed wish, had taken the decision of evacuating the island; but that His Majesty, who would show me the documents, would take such measures against his Ministers as they deserved. Utterly astounded at this comedy, I told Tassim Pasha that His Majesty evidently desired to find out how far my credulity would go if he thought I was likely to believe such a fable. No one would ever believe, I added, that such a thing could take place in the Empire without express orders from the Sultan, without whose wishes a simple lieutenant could not move from place to place. All this humbug was no doubt arranged in order that I should spread the version of the affair invented by the Monarch in order to exculpate him in the eyes of his people.

About this time I had the idea of starting a publication to defend reform in general and the interests of the Empire. I was supported in this idea by Sir Philip Currie, whose great desire to render services to the Empire, in spite of the Sultan's mischievous policy, was equalled by his personal friendship for myself. I therefore decided to resume the publication of a periodical review called *Medjra-Efkiar* (" The Course of Ideas "), which I had formerly published at Rustchuk when I was there with Midhat Pasha, changing it into a political bi-weekly newspaper. As it was impossible to publish it at Constantinople, I installed the press at Philippopolis, and there the paper appeared, being despatched from thence to the capital. The Sultan, furious at my action, sent for me, and insisted that I should stop the publication, asking what I wished as recompense. I did all I could to make him understand the advantages of the publication of such an organ, the aim of which was simply the defence of his Sovereign rights and the rights of his Empire. As to recompense, I only asked for the high honour of having His Majesty as my first subscriber, with £1 as the price of his subscription.

In spite of the seizures of the paper by the police on its arrival at Constantinople, there was no lack of copies in the capital, and the public bought them up at double and treble their price. The paper continued to appear for some time, but the Sultan never ceased worrying me about it in one way or another. One evening I was called to the Palace, and the Governor-General of Konia having died, was offered this post, the Sultan at the same time making the formal declaration that he could not permit an ex-functionary of State to occupy himself with the publication of a newspaper and abandon the service of the country. It was plain that I could not continue to live at Constantinople while publishing my newspaper at Philippopolis. On the other hand, I did not want to accept the position of Governor of Konia or any of the other posts, the choice of which was left absolutely to me. I took counsel with Sir Philip Currie in the matter, and he was of opinion that it would be best for me to remain at Constantinople, which meant stopping the paper. In the sequel I accepted the post of Councillor of State.

The Sultan, who had a great horror of anything recalling to his mind a Parliament, had prohibited the meetings of the sections of the *Conseil d'État* in a general assembly, although, according to the organic law regulating these councils, general meetings should take place twice a week. To fill the gap he had created a special group called the Civil Section, the task of which was to examine and pass in final revision the decisions of the other sections. I was myself appointed to this group, and we formed a sort of sub-section among the most enlightened members so as to devote all our efforts to upsetting the arbitrary conclusions of the Ministers and Governors of provinces. Thanks to the continual vigilance of this small group, many abuses were detected and abolished. One day an official communication reached us from the Minister of the Interior asking us to take a decision with a view to legalising the arbitrary exile and deportation of different chiefs of the country, who were frequently exiled with their families, and their homes burnt, by order of the Governors, without the slightest form of trial or sanction of the tribunals. The

Minister of the Interior in his report related in the most cynical manner all the different acts of this kind that had been carried out by various functionaries and his desire to systematise them by means of a special regulation. In other words, his aim was to legitimatise that which was utterly illegal, so suppressing the sole vestige that remained of the famous *Tanzimat* or Constitution. It was decided that this proposal should be rejected by the Civil Section, like others of its kind, but the hesitation of some of my colleagues at the last moment broke up the majority, and this monstrous proposition was very nearly being accepted after all. Seeing this, it seemed to me there was but one way of gaining the desired end in so important a matter, and that was to create an agitation that would strike the imagination of the Sultan and force him to take action. I presented a motion—demanding that it should be placed in the *procès-verbal* of the affair at the meeting of the *Conseil d'État*—in which I pointed out that if this measure were sanctioned, it would be going in direct opposition to the formal declarations of the Sultan Abd-ul-Medjid, the father of Abd-ul-Hamid, in the *Tanzimat,* wherein he had called down the curse of God upon any of his successors who should infringe the law thus set up. The President, in great alarm, exclaimed that we had nothing to do with the Sultan and his father, but I insisted that this passage must be retained in the *procès-verbal,* since, I repeated, we owed fidelity to the Sovereign and had no right to render him responsible before the shade of his august father for infringing his great monument of the *Tanzimat.* The matter was, of course, at once reported to the Sultan, who immediately called the Ministers, and in great agitation soundly rated them and charged them with working up a plot against him and spreading the report that he was trying to abolish the *Tanzimat.* Messengers were sent in the night to fetch the papers relating to the affair, and so the incident ended.

In an Albanian town where the Catholics did not possess a church, the faithful were in the habit of meeting each Sunday and hearing mass at the house of one of the notables. As the local authorities forbade these religious services, the Austro-Hungarian Embassy interfered to get the prohibition raised. There were two points about this affair which seemed to me as revolting as they were arbitrary. First of all, how and by what right could the authorities intervene in a meeting of free men, faithful subjects of the Sultan, for the carrying out of their religious duties? If one is free to meet together for joint pleasure, such as dancing, surely one should have the same liberty to meet for devotion in common. The second point that seemed utterly unreasonable was the intervention of Austria-Hungary. This Power, relying upon articles in the Treaties of Carlovitch and Passarovitch, pretended she had the right to exercise a protectorate over the Catholics of Albania. These two Treaties contained nothing explicit on the matter, but even if they had contained clauses as categoric as those of the Treaty of Kainarje (establishing Russian protection over those of the Orthodox faith in Turkey), they would have been abrogated after the Treaty of Paris, like others which accorded rights of protection to Russia, all the more so as, during the diplomatic negotiations which preceded the Crimean War, Austria-Hungary was the first to declare by an official Note that as she and France, which were Catholic Powers, had no right to protect the Catholic subjects of the Sultan, Russia had no right in the matter either regarding the Christian Orthodox subjects of Turkey. Unfortunately, this abuse—Austro-Hungarian protection of the Catholics—had been acknowledged as a sort of rule, and Kiamil Pasha, during his Grand Vizierate, had recognised the right by a decision of the Council of Ministers. In face of the difficulties we should have in upsetting this decision, the *Conseil d'État* decided to give facilities for the building of churches and other religious and educational establishments for the Catholics, spontaneously according them *firmans* for this purpose, so that the Catholic population should not feel any need for foreign intervention.

During a lunch at which I was present at the British Embassy, Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the Ambassador, told me he had received a letter from Lord Rosebery announcing his arrival at Constantinople, and that he wished me to make his acquaintance. A few days later I got a note from the Ambassador inviting me to a small dinner at which Lord Rosebery, who had now arrived, would be present. I accepted the invitation, and, on the day fixed, as I happened to be at the Palace, I injudiciously informed the Sultan that I was going to dine with the British ex-Premier, and asked if His Majesty wished me to suggest anything particular to him. Abd-ul-Hamid sent word back that he did not wish me to be present at this dinner, and that I must send my excuses to the Ambassador. It was impossible for me to submit to such a caprice, for which there was no reason, and which would make me ridiculous in the eyes of Lord Rosebery and the Ambassador. Furthermore, if, at the last moment I sent an excuse, as suggested, it would be known that His Majesty was responsible for it, and this would create a very bad impression. But all my arguments to justify my wish to be present were unavailing to convince the Sultan, who sent all my friends at the Palace in turn to try and dissuade me. Seeing that all discussion was useless, and as the hour of dinner was approaching, I wrote a little note to His Majesty, which I handed to one of the valets, asking him to present it to the Sultan a quarter of an hour after I had left. In this I said I knew that to disobey the orders of my Imperial master was an act deserving of punishment, but that in the present case my own dignity and the interests of His Majesty required me not to miss this invitation, and that I should return on the morrow to await his orders. I accordingly went back the next day to receive my punishment, and told His Majesty I had had a conversation with Lord Rosebery, and that nothing had been said except what would redound to the interest of the Empire and the glory of the Sovereign. I heard no more of the incident. The Sultan, who was usually very courteous and amiable to distinguished Europeans who came to Constantinople, and who had shown very flattering attentions to Lord Rosebery's mother when she came to the capital on a visit some years before, must have been highly offended at the language Lord Rosebery had used concerning him when he was Minister for Foreign Affairs, to show such animosity towards him as he did on this occasion; and Lord Rosebery left the capital without seeing His Majesty.

After the victory in the Turco-Greek war, the three Powers who had taken an active part in the negotiations for Armenian reforms thought it necessary to change their Ambassadors at Constantinople. Through this I lost my good friend Sir Philip Currie, but on the other hand I had the satisfaction of getting another friend in M. Zinovieff, who years before had been my colleague on the European Commission of the Danube, and now came to succeed M. Nelidoff at the Turkish capital. As soon as he arrived he renewed his former friendly relations with me, and an intimacy shortly sprang up between us which gave me great pleasure, and which would have caused much uneasiness to the Sultan if M. Zinovieff had been the representative of any other but the Tsar. During the whole time I was at Constantinople I frequently saw Zinovieff, who in the summer months placed at my disposal a small apartment in his huge summer palace at Buyukdéré, where often I passed several days and nights with him and his other guests.

On several occasions M. Zinovieff entrusted me with communications for the Sultan on more or less delicate questions. One day he showed me an Imperial firman that had been seized among the effects of the Sheik Faisuli, who, having revolted against Russia and proclaimed a holy war in his Central Asian province, had been arrested and executed and his rebellion suppressed. We minutely examined this firman, which was written in Persian, a language the Ambassador knew well. The form and the *tourah* (or signature) of the Sultan seemed to me authentic, but the style was not that of the Imperial Divan. When I reported the matter to the Sultan, he protested that the document was a forgery, and regretted that he had not been advised of this insurrection at the outset, as he would have exercised all his influence as Caliph against it.

I have preserved the most pleasant memories of this Russian diplomat, who was animated by sentiments of justice that are rare among diplomats, especially those of Russia.

The Greek Patriarch of Antioch, of whose enthronement I spoke in another chapter, had committed a highly scandalous act both from the point of view of the interest of the Church and of that of the State. He had abandoned for a nice little sum the administration of the Orthodox churches and schools of Syria to the Russian Society of Palestine. We had the copy of the transaction between the prelate and the society before us at the *Conseil d'État.* When I told M. Zinovieff of the matter, he was highly indignant, and promised me at once to obtain information and take the necessary measures. But the affair was never settled, as the Sultan did not want to offend the Russian Court and the Ambassador could not fight against the distinguished influences that were mixed up in it. All that took place was that the Patriarch was revoked.

One of the agents of terrorism of whom the Sultan sometimes made use was Ghani Bey, of Tirana, brother of Essad Pasha, to whose influence this latter owed his successful career, which he began in the gendarmerie. This Ghani Bey had many crimes to his account during an adventurous life in his native country, and later at Constantinople, including several mysterious assassinations. Among these was the murder of a young Greek demi-mondaine, who, supposed to be the favourite of the Sultan's heir, Mahmoud, was suspected of acting as intermediary between him and certain foreigners ; she was foully done to death one day in her own home with her servant and her dog. A similar fate befel a young Italian girl, whose father was employed at the Palace, and who was suspected of acting as intermediary under similar circumstances. In spite of his life of crime, Ghani Bey was everywhere a favourite. His appearance belied his character, and nobody would have suspected him capable of such acts. As his family of Toptani had for long been related by marriage to mine, and as his sister was the mother of my nephew, he was always very respectful and affable to me. For some time, however, I had noticed a change in his manner towards me which I was at a loss to explain, for every time I met him at the Palace he tried to avoid me. One day my friend Ilias Bey and the Prefect of the city, Ridvan Pasha, took me aside, and in the greatest secrecy told me that Ghani Bey had informed them of an interview that had taken place between himself and the Sultan concerning me. According to this statement the Sultan had called Ghani Bey into his own private room and told him he wanted to get rid of certain people who were in his way. The first of these people whom it was desirable to do away with was myself ; but Ghani Bey was only required at the moment to take preliminary measures, while awaiting the Sultan's orders for the accomplishment of the fact. Ghani Bey assured my friends that he would never carry out this wish of the Sultan, and that if he persisted and gave him definite orders, he would either flee the country or blow out his own brains. Having given me this information, my two friends advised me to be on my guard. Although certainly I had cause for anxiety, I thought the best thing for me to do was to keep quiet about the matter and ask these two to advise

Ghani Bey not to talk about it. I said His Majesty might have talked in this manner to Ghani Bey in a moment of nervous excitement, but that I did not believe he would ever carry out such an intention, and that the real danger for either Ghani or myself would be if the Sultan learned that he had let his tongue wag. I heard no more of this matter until, being one evening some time later at Pera, I stopped outside a dressmaker's shop where I had some business, and on my stepping from my carriage, the Governor of Pera came behind me, and, touching me on the shoulder, informed me that Ghani Bey had just committed suicide. I was horrified at this news, remembering the incident I have just related. The Governor suggested my going with him to the milk-shop, where he told me the body was lying, but I had neither the nerve nor the desire to go and see the body. I went straight home, and passed a very agitated night. The next day, however, my emotion was somewhat calmed when I learned the real nature of Ghani's death. He had simply paid back the blood he had taken. He had lately been very friendly with a certain Hafiz Pasha, a former chief of gendarmerie. For some time they had been inseparable, and, on the day in question, in the midst of what seemed to be mere tomfoolery, the two men laughingly said they would kill each other. "I'll show you how it is done," said Hafiz, levelling his revolver at the other's head. The shot was fired, and Ghani Bey fell dead. In simulated fright at the supposed accident, Hafiz cried out, "A doctor! a doctor!" and rushed from the place. He was never seen or heard of again.

The Transvaal War and the losses which the British armies were suffering in the early part of the operations had become a matter of the most palpitating interest for the population of the country, as the great majority of the Turkish people felt a sincere sympathy for the English, despite the unconcealed jubilation of the Sultan, and of those who followed his policy, especially the army officers who had made their studies in Germany. Many good patriots came to discuss the matter with me and express their regrets, and the result of it all was that we decided to organise a demonstration at the Embassy in order to express to the British people the gratitude of the Turks for all that England had done for them during more than a century in defending the country against all dangers, both with her armies and with the power of her politics.

Ten persons belonging to various intellectual classes constituted themselves into a deputation and called upon Sir Nicolas O'Conor, the Ambassador at the time, and handed him an address of sympathy. When the Sultan learned of this, he became furious, and started proceedings against those who had taken part in the deputation. Those who came in for the chief brunt of the persecution were my eldest son, Mahmoud, who was *maître de requêtes* at the *Conseil d'État*; Siret Bey, a young littérateur, who was related to some of the noblest families of Constantinople; Hamdi Effendi Zahravy, of Syria, an ulema, who was in later years my colleague at the Chamber of Deputies, and who quite recently, while he was a Senator, was executed by Djemal Pasha, with many other notables of Syria; and Ubedullah Effendi, also an ulema, later a deputy and one of the most ardent propagandists of the Young Turk party. While they were being subjected to endless interrogations at the Palace, I was also asked to go to Yildiz, where the Chamberlain, Faik Bey, questioned me in order to make me avow my co-operation in the matter. I did not hesitate to tell the truth, nor to let the Sultan know that my friends and I, as well as those who went to the Embassy in the name of their compatriots, thought it was our patriotic duty publicly to show the sympathy which all Turks felt with Great Britain, the friend of Turkey and of the Ottoman dynasty, in the hour of her difficulty. We had thought that the Sultan, as our chief and the Sovereign of the country which owed so much to England, would have been the first to approve this act. But if the Sultan considered it a crime, then I was not only the accomplice in such crime, but actually the instigator, and as such was ready to accept the consequences. When all this had been told to the Sultan, Faik Bey came back to inform me that His Majesty was about to send me to an unknown destination, and that the boat that was to take me was actually ready to leave. He was in the act of saying this when one of His Majesty's servants came in great haste to fetch Faik Bey. He returned a few minutes later, and bringing me the Sultan's greetings, expressed in a courteous and cordial manner, and the assurance that he had not the least doubt as to my loyalty to him, added His Majesty's request that I should in future do nothing with the Ambassadors without first of all consulting him. Though naturally satisfied to have escaped the tempest that was threatening me, I was also anxious to secure the liberation of the others inculpated, but in this I was not successful. As a mere matter of delicacy I could not ask the Ambassador to intervene energetically in favour of the victims; but, as I had suggested to Sir Nicolas, it seemed to me he had but to go to the Palace and express his thanks to His Majesty direct for this spontaneous act of his subjects for the Sultan to be at once disarmed and cease the persecution. The Ambassador took no action, however, and the whole four were exiled to distant parts of Asia Minor.

After this event, relations between the Sultan and myself became more and more strained, and I found that my movements were the object of much attention on the part of the secret police. Some few days later, while I was on a visit at the Embassy, Lady O'Conor asked me to stay to luncheon, and as I remained chatting for some time afterwards and did not leave the Embassy, the Sultan was informed of the matter. In great concern and anger he sent an aide-de-camp to fetch me to the Palace. I left, however, before he arrived, and, as I did so, met my friend, Ilias Bey, Master of the Wardrobe, who told me he was looking for one of my sons in order to send him to advise me to take precautions, as the Sultan was going to have me arrested. A little further on I met the aide-de-camp coming to fetch me from the Embassy. He left his carriage and came into mine, and together we went to the Palace. But the Sultan seemed to have got over his bad temper, for, in spite of the alarming reports I had heard, he was satisfied to ask me a few commonplace questions, and left me to go home.

Some little time later, however, the Minister of Police and the Governor of Pera, acting on instructions from the Palace, each submitted a report to the Sovereign which alleged that the public, seduced by my writings and speeches, were in a state of great excitement, and that my presence at Constantinople had become a menace to public order. The Council of Ministers was called in hot haste to the Palace, and the Ministers were presented with the reports in question by Izzet Bey, who asked them to come to a decision with regard to my removal from the capital. Most of the Ministers opposed the demand, contending that a State functionary could not be punished without trial and judgment. Izzet Bey persisted. He said the Sultan regretted this want of agreement between him and his Ministers; that as the Sovereign he was free to exile whomsoever he wished without needing any decision from his Ministers, but that in order to have the proof of harmony between him and his Ministers, he desired them to take this resolution. He promised, however, that he would not carry it out. Upon this the Ministers came to the conclusion that they had better yield to the Sultan's wishes, and the "decision" was signed and handed over to Izzet Bey to be submitted to His Majesty. Several of the Ministers at the same time gave me warning of what had taken place. My situation had thus become an impossible one. I was supposed to ignore the facts, but this "sentence" of the Ministerial Council continued to hang over me like a sword of Damocles and took from me all spirit and desire to work.

One day the Sultan, excited by some cause of which I knew nothing, sent an aide-de-camp to fetch me immediately to the Palace. The same Izzet Bey received me and went at once to announce my arrival to the Sultan. Returning to me, he was accompanied by the other Chamberlain, Faik Bey, whom he preceded, and, coming close up to me, remarked in a tragic manner, "Take care, I beg of you—take care; it is a very serious matter." Then the two Chamberlains informed me that His Majesty, who had been much impressed by my conduct, which he found exactly similar to that of Midhat Pasha during the latter part of the reign of his uncle, the late Abd-ul-Aziz, asked me for clear and categorical explanations. Without losing my *sangfroid*, I told them I protested strongly against these suspicions, which had not the least foundation in fact. In the first place, His Majesty knew very well that I had been opposed in principle to the deposition of his uncle, who had been for me nothing but the Sovereign; whereas with regard to his present Majesty, who had covered me with favours and kindness, I not only owed him the fidelity of a subject, but actual gratitude. On the other hand, I could not hide from him that I was dissatisfied with the condition of affairs in the Empire, and His Majesty knew that in order to get the evils redressed, I had gone to him direct simply for his own good and that of the Empire.

The two Chamberlains conveyed my reply back to His Majesty, and presently returned again, this time looking more reassured. They said the Sultan had received my assurances with great pleasure, and wished to know what exactly was in my mind when I stated that the laws were not being observed; furthermore, what I would say when I heard Edhem Bey, who had been the First Chamberlain of his brother, the Sultan Murad, and with whom the Sultan would confront me, say that Midhat Pasha was not at all a partisan of the Constitution, and that he had refused to allow Murad to promulgate it, declaring that it had only been a pretext used to dethrone Abd-ul-Aziz. These questions struck me as strangely fantastical. I replied that by the laws I meant all that were contained in the Statute Book, which had been in a large measure promulgated by His Majesty, but of which not a single one was respected or carried out at that time. With regard to the Constitution, which in my opinion was the crown to His Majesty's legislative work, I did not urge its being put into operation because Midhat Pasha had done so, but simply because it was my own conviction, and any testimony by Edhem Bey of the nature indicated would not change my conviction a particle.

They went to the Sultan again with these declarations of mine, and when they came back brought with them a red satin bag containing several hundred Turkish pounds. They told me the Sultan was very satisfied with my protestation of fidelity to his throne and person, and he begged me in future to come to the Palace every two days to see the various officials and to keep in continual touch with His Majesty. In view of the serious nature of the situation, I was forced to accept the Sovereign's gift and to leave the Palace with a more or less satisfied air. In conformity with His Majesty's wishes I continued to call at the Palace every week, and went to see Hadji-Ali Bey, who announced my arrival to His Majesty. He found some commonplace question to ask me each time.

On the second day of the fête of Bairam I was awakened at dawn to learn that a messenger from the Palace had come to ask me to go there immediately. The messenger added that this time I should find the object of the invitation to my entire satisfaction, and therefore I had no cause for concern. As I was never without anxiety at this time, this extremely matutinal invitation caused me some apprehension, which was emphasised rather than allayed by the messenger's assurances. I went to the Palace at once. When Izzet Bey saw me, he immediately asked if the messenger had given me satisfactory assurances. After announcing my arrival to the Sultan, he returned and said that His Majesty had not been able to sleep all night on account of the worry caused him by the situation of the Tripolitain. The French had encroached so much on the territory of this province; the Italians always nurtured envious designs, and the population of the country, entirely Mussulman, would end by losing confidence in their Sovereign and Caliph if something were not done. All the Governors who had ruled over this distant province had unfortunately thought of little except taking care of their own personal interests without heeding those of the Empire. To bring order into this state of affairs His Majesty had thought of me, and if I would accept this post I should be rendering appreciable services to the Empire, which His Majesty would not be slow to recognise. Although my first impression was that the Sultan was seeking to carry out the famous decision of the Council of Ministers to get me away from the capital, I nevertheless at once accepted this offer. I asked Izzet Bey to tell His Majesty that I shared entirely his concern with regard to the situation of this province, but that it was not the only one whose fate was deplorable. The provinces of Turkey in Europe were already in revolt, everything was in disorder in Asiatic Turkey, and even the capital was not free from danger. The Tripolitain was perhaps the country least in need of the Sultan's care. Nevertheless, if His Majesty thought that my small capacity would be of use in improving the lot of this country and removing His Majesty's anxiety, I should be happy thus to serve him and the Empire. Izzet Bey took my message, and returned bringing me His Majesty's thanks, and made me write and sign a couple of lines by which I undertook this task and promised continued fidelity to His Majesty. As it was a question of giving me very extended powers, the Sultan recalled the instructions which had been given me on the occasion of my first nomination to this same post, and I was ordered to send for these instructions so as to have them completed and extended. My appointment having been officially announced, I began the formation of a new staff that was to accompany me for the civil and military service of the province. At the same time I tried to get at the secret of the motive for my appointment. The essential point for me to know was whether the Sultan's object was simply to get rid of me by exiling me to this distant part of the Empire, where I should have to suffer all sorts of annoyances and humiliations, if not worse, or whether he really intended that my services were to be employed for the good of the State. If this latter supposition turned out to be the true one, though the Sultan would have the satisfaction of no longer having to support my presence in Constanttinople, I should not be dissatisfied at having accepted the post. But as time went on I had more than one indication that the object of my appointment was neither to give me any real satisfaction nor was it any sincere desire for the reorganisation of the country.

These doubts, added to all I had experienced and suffered latterly, convinced me that my best course was to finish with it all once and for all and go and live abroad, where I could in the first place enjoy some measure of personal liberty, and secondly, I could follow the course of events in order to do something useful for my native country of Albania.

In a personal and confidential letter which I sent through Sir Adam Block, I explained to Sir Nicolas O'Conor the resolution I had come to, and asked him to confirm instructions which had been given in the time of Sir Philip Currie to the commander of the British stationary vessel to give me hospitality in case I wanted to take refuge on board, since it would be impossible for me to leave the capital in the ordinary way.

In the meanwhile the Sultan did all he could to impress me by the favours he showered on me. The salary of my new post was doubled, a present was to be given me for the expenses of the journey, and I was made to understand that further gifts in money and decorations would be given me before I left. But all these favours, which at any time would have left me indifferent, now lost any value they might have had by the pressure exercised upon me to hurry my departure. Finally, one Friday morning I was asked to go to the Palace, and Izzet Bey told me that His Majesty was anxious that I should leave as quickly as possible, that he wanted to receive me that same Friday after the ceremony of the Selamlik to take leave of him, and that I was to go directly from the Palace to embark on board the Imperial yacht, *Fuart* (which was to take me, and which had been refurnished specially for me, although I had said I would prefer to sail on an ordinary steamer of the postal service). He added that if my personal affairs required my remaining still one or two days, I could nevertheless live on the yacht. This extraordinary haste to see the last of me, and particularly the hidden intimidation of Izzet Bey's manner, decided me to leave for Europe at once. I promised the Chamberlain that I would return the next morning (Saturday) to see His Majesty, and would embark on board the yacht as soon as the audience was over, in accordance with the Imperial desire. From the Palace I went immediately to the British Embassy, and orders were given at once for the captain of the *stationnaire* to receive me.

The next morning I sent a servant with a card for Izzet Bey, telling him that after a short visit to Galata I would go to the Palace. I then took a small embarkation boat with my three sons, instructing the boatmen that before going to Galata we were to be taken to the foreign *station-*

naires, beginning with the British one, in order to leave my cards. Once on board, I dismissed the boat and remained.

At the Palace they waited for me, and there was some consternation when I did not appear. When the Sultan was informed two days later by the British Embassy that I had taken refuge on board their boat with the intention of leaving for abroad, he was extremely annoyed, and declared that he could not understand the reason for my action. He asked the Embassy to persuade me to leave the vessel so as to depart from the capital afterwards in the ordinary way, if I wished to do so, when I might take with me all I should need ; but that if I decided to remain, I might keep the post that had been given to me or any other post that I might desire. The Councillor of the Embassy, Sir Adam Block, came to tell me of this desire of the Sultan and give me guarantees for my liberty. Though pleased at this result, I thanked the representative of the Embassy, and handed him my resignation of the Governorship of Tripoli, with the request that he would hand it to His Majesty, and persisted in my intention to leave.

My old friend, Ridvan Pasha, Mayor of the city, came to try and make me disembark, and was very much upset in face of my obstinacy. At our interview in the cabin a young English midshipman, named Baber, excusing himself to the Pasha, insisted upon being present, and sat in an arm-chair between us, according, as he said, to the instructions he had received. Ridvan did not leave until after midnight, announcing that he would return the next day. He did return, and restarted his attempts at persuasion, telling me that he would be in danger of being persecuted himself if I did not yield to his entreaties. His insistence, indeed, became annoying, and, assuring him of my friendly feelings for himself, I was compelled to tell him at the same time that I could not think of sacrificing my honour to my friendship for him, and that I was ready, if he wished, to throw myself into the Bosphorus to show my friendship for him, but would never again lay myself open to be subjected to the Sultan's caprices.

I then sent for the luggage which, to safeguard appearances, I had had conveyed to the Imperial yacht. The next day the captain of the port and one of the officers of the English man-of-war escorted us on board a Khedivial boat (flying the British flag), where I was visited by a large number of friends. News of my departure having spread round Constantinople, the quays were thronged by a vast concourse of the population, who had come to see me off and showed great sympathy with me. I sailed from the Bosphorus on May 1st, 1900.

The vessel called at Mitylene and Smyrna, where officials from the British Consulate came on board to make the usual visits. On our arrival at the Piræus I was received by Colonel Sutcho, sent by the Hellenic Government to receive me and take me to the Hôtel de la Grande Bretagne, where I lived during my entire stay at Athens. On the day of my arrival, I exchanged visits with the President of the Council, M. Theotokis, and on the third day I was received in audience by the late King George I, who showed me great affability and kindness—a kindness with which he honoured me for the rest of his life. The welcome which I received everywhere in this capital that I had loved and admired ever since my childhood touched me so deeply that it seemed to me as if I was in my own country and was going through a series of fêtes. Affinity of race and similarity of habits, up to a certain point, as well as the rôles the two peoples had played in ancient and modern times, engendered a certain mutual sympathy between the Albanians and the Greeks. But now, especially since the Greeks were suffering from their recent tribulations, while the Slav danger constituted a real menace for them, they looked upon the Albanians as possible assistants and as a potent factor in co-operation for the restoration of the two countries. My stay in the Greek capital brought to the surface all the old sympathies, and the political men of Albanian origin, as if answering the call of old associations, spoiled me with kindly tokens of friendship. They seemed to be puzzled to decide whether my compatriots and I ought to co-operate with them for the benefit of Greece, or whether they would bring the men of their second motherland along with them in a movement to help towards the restoration of the country of their origin. I was proud and pleased to note that the feeling of nationality was so deeply and strongly rooted with the Albanians, in spite of the centuries of change in political and social conditions. I found great pleasure in strolling about in the mornings during my stay under this beautiful Attic sky listening to my maternal tongue spoken by the Albanians in the streets and the market, but what gave me the most pleasing sensation of all was what was said by the King's aide-de-camp, who was descended from one of the heroic families of Albania, as we passed from the ante-room into the King's presence on the occasion of my second visit. "Bey," he exclaimed, "don't let yourself be led away by these *hot-heads*; do your best to make a free Albania for us so that we can all reunite there."

Although political events have since then imparted another direction to the sentiments of these two peoples, I feel sure that sooner or later the common love of liberty shared by the Albanians and the Greeks will lead them to an entente and the setting up of a counterpoise in the Balkan peninsula for the good of all. I drew up a number of proclamations at Athens, which I addressed to all the chief centres in Albania, explaining to my compatriots first of all the reasons which had forced me to leave my post and my service with the Empire to which we were all attached, and whose maintenance and glory we all wished to see continued. Then I sketched the political programme that we ought to follow in order to preserve Albania from a national catastrophe.

A few days after my arrival at Athens I was visited by my friend, Ilias Bey, whom His Majesty had sent to me to try and persuade me to return to Constantinople, giving me all possible guarantees for the future. At the same time, Kiamil Pasha, the ex-Grand Vizier, who was now Governor-General of Smyrna, wrote me a very kind letter, which he sent by the President of the Municipality of Smyrna, Echreff Pasha, and in which he personally went guarantee for the future consideration of the Sultan, and advised me to accept the post of Governor-General of Beyrouth, in preference to any Ministerial post that might be offered me, as that would at least enable me to lead a life agreeable to myself.

All these guarantees offered me by political personages and by personal friends seemed to me to be utterly useless. I ended, however, by being convinced that the Sultan was keenly desirous of keeping me and having me in his service. It was neither doubt nor suspicion that made me persist in my decision. The experiences I had gone through during the past few years, and the confessions the Sultan had on several occasions made to me, had convinced me that one could have obtained anything one wished from this Sovereign in the way of personal advancement and benefit, but absolutely nothing for the good of the country. I might have reached supreme power in the Empire, but, as the Sultan did not acknowledge the existence together of honesty and fidelity, the more I had risen in rank, the less power I should have had to fulfil my duty and do good. I never forget how the Sultan told me one day that I was wrong to imagine that any good could ever be achieved with his Ministers. The old time, he said, had passed when all in the Empire were devoted to the Sovereign and all the honours of success were attributed to him, the Ministers only claiming responsibility for failures or mistakes. Nowadays, he said, it was only by permitting corruption that he was able to keep a hold on his Ministers.

My conviction of the impossibility of ever doing any good work being thus fixed, my resolution to continue on the path I had taken was also unshakeable. I gave Ilias Bey a letter for the Sultan, and sent a reply to Kiamil Pasha. On his leaving me, Ilias Bey had acknowledged the justice of my views, but a little while after his return to Constantinople I received a letter from him in which, pledging our ancient friendship for the truth of his assertions, he told me that the Sultan had been touched to tears by the letter I had sent him and by his own explanations, and he was so convinced that the Sovereign was now sincere that he implored me to return.

It had, of course, been a hard and painful thing for my sons and myself thus to exile ourselves voluntarily without being able to see any issue to this new situation, but the sympathies showered on me on all sides and by all kinds of people, foreign as well as Greek, went a good way towards consoling us. A vessel full of tourists from Australia had been at Constantinople at the time of my departure, and, having learned what had taken place, these good people, when they arrived at Athens, insisted upon my receiving them. Our interview was very cordial, and my new friends in their kindly enthusiasm invited me to go out to Australia.

After a stay of six weeks I left Athens in company with Musurus Ghikis Bey, who had joined me there, having also given up his post of *Conseiller d'État* and left the country. Among others whose acquaintance I made at Athens were Sir E. H. Egerton, then British Minister, Mr. Boucher, the correspondent of the *Times*, and Sir Arthur Evans, the distinguished excavator of Knossos, with whom I made the journey to Foggia, whence I went on to Naples.

CHAPTER XVII

1900–08

JOURNEY THROUGH EUROPE—ATTACKS ON MY LIFE—MORE OFFERS FROM THE SULTAN—ALBANIAN INTRIGUES—MY ORGAN AT BRUSSELS—YOUNG TURK CONFERENCE AT PARIS—PROJECTS FOR REMEDYING TURKISH AFFAIRS—SUPPORT FROM GREAT BRITAIN—ABORTIVE PLANS—THE ALBANIANS OF SICILY—REFORMERS' LACK OF COHESION—THE CONSTITUTION PROCLAIMED AT LAST—ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN—YOUNG TURKS IN POWER—RETURN TO CONSTANTINOPLE.

I ALREADY knew Naples pretty well, but, as I wanted to show my sons the beauties of this town and neighbourhood and the antiquities of Pompeii, we stayed there a few days and visited the ruins of the Roman city several times. On the last occasion we had an opportunity of witnessing the magnificent spectacle of the British Fleet anchored before Castellamare. From Naples we went on to Rome, where I had the pleasure of finding Sir Philip (now Lord) Currie, who had been transferred thither from Constantinople. The Ambassador and Lady Currie received me with their usual kindness and charm, and, thanks to them, I made several interesting acquaintances, among others that of Mr. Wickham Steed, correspondent of the *Times*, with whom my friendship has continued ever since. It was Mr. Steed who presented me to Sig. Sydney Sonnino, the distinguished Italian Statesman, who showed much interest in Eastern affairs generally, and particularly in the Albanian question. At the head of the Consulta at this time was the famous old diplomat Visconti-Venosta, who was also greatly interested in me personally and in the cause.

The Sultan, who was uneasy at my journey through Europe, and was trying to make it difficult for me, instructed his Ambassador at Rome to do his utmost to make me leave. Visconti-Venosta's observations in reply to the Ambassador's efforts in this direction were very flattering to me. The Prince of Naples—the present King—being then at Constantinople on his return from his travels in the East, the Sultan took advantage to speak to the heir to the throne about me, and, in order to give more weight to his insinuations, he granted all the requests that were made of him by the Italian Government, among other things for a plot of land for the Embassy at Pera.

I made the acquaintance of many political men at Rome, but what gave me the most pleasure was the interview I had with the veteran Crispi, who spoke to me with great pride of his Albanian origin. Through a lucky chance I was staying at the Hôtel de l'Europe, where the eminent statesman was living with his family. Crispi was worn and tired, and had to make a considerable effort in order to receive me and to tell me many fine and interesting things about my country and its destiny, which he was convinced would soon be brilliant. He spoke Albanian, and told me that when he was younger he spoke it much better. His works on the Albanian tongue, I may add, are very valuable.

After three weeks' stay in the Italian capital we left for Switzerland. My intention had been to establish my children at Lausanne for their schooling, and, after visiting different parts of Switzerland, we arrived at this latter town. But letters I had received from my friends at Constantinople had somewhat upset me. They told me that the Sultan, after my departure from Athens, had sent agents all over Albania to carry on a propaganda against me and obtain disapproval of my acts from my compatriots. In most of the Albanian centres they refused to conform to the desires of the Monarch's envoys. Essad Pasha, however, as chief of the gendarmerie, went to my native town and threatened my compatriots if he did not get a written statement from them. These letters also brought me the graver information that men had been sent to Europe for the purpose of making an attack on my life. My friends even sent me the description and origin of these sinister individuals.

One day, on our return from a visit to Geneva, two men of suspicious appearance and movements hustled me at Ouchy and got into the same compartment in the funicular railway. As there were only ladies in the compartment besides myself and my sons, I thought it imprudent to continue my journey in company with these two fellows, and so at the first station we stopped at we left the compartment; the two men immediately did the same. On our return to the hotel I reported this little adventure, which seemed to corroborate the advices I had received from Constantinople, by a note to the police, and the next day I left for Paris and London, giving up the idea of installing my sons at Lausanne. The Swiss police were very attentive to me, and I was accompanied by an officer and several men until the departure of the train for France. We arrived in the French capital the same evening, which was the eve of July 14th, and my sons were much impressed by the sight of the crowds amusing themselves and dancing in the streets. We spent several weeks in Paris, and I thought I would settle my boys there and then go on to London.

One of my desires, however, was to have an organ in which to defend the cause of Albania, and with this end in view I wrote to my compatriot Faik Bey Konitza, who had for several years published a newspaper called *Albania* at Brussels, to get an interview with him, and see if it was possible to have his paper as my organ. He suggested that I should make my journey to London via Brussels and Ostend, so that I could meet him. I did this, and Brussels so charmed me with its beauty, especially that of the Avenue Louise quarter, that I determined at once to choose the Belgian capital as my future place of residence. I took a house in the Avenue Louise, and, after sending for my sons from Paris, went on to London.

In London I found that Lord Salisbury was away in the country, but I was received by his private secretary, who had received instructions to place himself at my disposal. At the same time this gentleman hinted that the relations between the British Government and the Sultan had latterly much improved—a fact which, as I assured him, could only afford me satisfaction.

During my stay in London my second son, Tahir, who was a naval officer and aide-de-camp of the Sultan, came to me on a confidential mission from the Monarch, to persuade me to return to Constantinople. The Sultan had said he must do his utmost to induce me to return, but should I still refuse, and he (Tahir) be also tempted not to return, he must leave that matter " to his milk " (in the Turkish phrase, meaning to his own inclinations). As a matter of fact, when I gave my son the same answer that I had given to other emissaries of Abd-ul-Hamid, and entrusted him with a letter for the Sovereign, Tahir expressed a desire not to return. Here, however, I insisted, considering it my son's duty in honour bound to return when he had accomplished this confidential mission, and I had to threaten him that if he did not do so I should be forced to return myself in his place.

I went back to Brussels, where I settled down for a time, and, having concluded an arrangement with the proprietor of *Albania*, began the management of this paper, and at the same time prepared a short work on the Transvaal War, the object of which was to explain the reasons for my leaving Constantinople, and to set forth the feeling of the Mussulman world with regard to the civilising work of Great Britain. This pamphlet, written in Turkish, was translated and published in English,[1] French, and Arabic (the Turkish and Arabic versions being printed at Cairo). My relations with Faik Bey did not last long. He left Brussels shortly afterwards, and I had to start another paper, which I called *Le Salut de l'Albanie,* and which was printed in Albanian, Turkish, and Greek. It was a rather complicated matter. The Turkish version was printed at Folkestone, where a special press for the composition of that language had been set up; the Albanian part was printed at Brussels, and the Greek was sent to Athens to be set up. It was soon after my return to Brussels from London that the Turkish Ambassador at Paris instructed the Turkish consul at Brussels to say that he wished to come and see me in order to give me some messages from the Sultan, and asking me to make an appointment. When Munir Pasha came to Brussels, he told me he had been instructed by the Sultan to offer me a new post. As His Majesty was now convinced that I would no longer accept a post in the Empire, rather than that I should remain a fugitive he offered me a post as extra Ambassador for all countries, with the mission of studying the different institutions of Europe and making reports on them so that they might serve as bases for reforms in Turkey. I, of course, declined this curious offer, replying that His Majesty knew perfectly well why I had refused further service in the Empire, and that for the same reasons I could not accept the proffered task and continue to live on Turkish money as recompense for purely imaginary services; but that at the same time His Majesty could continue to count on my fidelity and my good wishes for the happiness of the Empire.

As the death of Queen Victoria happened about this time, I went to London to take part in the funeral. Among the Royal visitors in London for the occasion was the King of Greece, who was the guest of his brother-in-law and sister, the

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[1] See the *Fortnightly Review* for January, 1901, in which the text of this pamphlet is published.

King and Queen. King George, who ever since I had had the honour of knowing him had continued to extend a very special sympathy to me, now also remembered the promises he had made me, and invited me to Marlborough House, where he was staying, and, receiving me with that particular charm and bonhomie that were native to him, he told me of the recommendations he had impressed upon his Royal relatives concerning Albania.

There had always been a rather large colony of Albanians, both Mussulmans and Christians, in Egypt, and the committee of this colony now notified me of the pleasure they would experience at receiving me in Egypt. As I had always had a desire to visit this country, their flattering invitation decided me to undertake the journey. On arriving at Cairo, I was received in audience by the Khedive, and I exchanged visits with Lord Cromer (who was kind enough to promise me special consideration for this Albanian committee) and with the High Commissary for Turkey, Ghazi Moukhtar Pasha. It was while I was enjoying this hospitality of my compatriots and of political circles in Cairo that intrigues began concerning Albania, and the most curious of all was the act of Mehmet Ali Pasha, brother of the Khedive. In spite of the fact that I did not know him personally, he informed the Sultan by telegram that I had offered him the throne of Albania, which he said he had refused as being contrary to his feelings of fidelity to the Caliph. This denunciation, which brought him as recompense the grade and title of Vizier, must have worked upon his conscience, since, on the occasion of my second visit to Egypt, he came to me on his own initiative to explain and justify his act, which he claimed arose from excess of zeal. On my return to Rome the Ambassador came to see me, and showed me a telegram from the Sultan in which His Majesty instructed his representative to reproach me with the fact that I had promised when I went away—especially to his envoy, Ilias Bey—not to have anything to do with politics, and that, in spite of this, I had visited Egypt, I had let it be known that I was trying to make a principality of Albania, and I had offered the throne to the Khedive's brother. He added that if I did not disavow these things, he would have me condemned before the tribunals. My reply was that the Sultan was mistaken in saying I had promised to have nothing more to do with politics. What I had promised was not to make attacks upon His Majesty personally—a promise which I had kept and intended to keep. As to Albania, I could not offer the throne of a country which did not exist, and, even if I could have done so, I had no reasons, but rather the contrary, for giving the preference to an Egyptian Prince. In spite of my denials, the Sultan had me tried for high treason in the courts of Constantinople, with the result that I was condemned to death in default, with the loss of my civil rights, rank, dignities, decorations, and property.

The campaign on which I had engaged in my organ at Brussels, besides its general character, had also a special side to it. Apart from the common cause of the Oriental peoples, I was naturally particularly anxious to defend the interests of my own country's people, which in certain respects seemed to me to be identical with those of the Greek people. A wave of mutual sympathy was reflected in the Greek press as well as in my organ, in which I admitted the expression of opinions favourable to common action in defence of the interests of the two peoples against Slavism, the tendencies of which at the time seemed to be dangerous to both. This community of sentiment was responsible for the proposal of a singular task for me on behalf of the press of Athens. Queen Olga, who was extremely devout, had had the Gospels translated and printed in the vulgar tongue. Public feeling in Athens was greatly upset by this, and the result was a popular rising against the Government, and especially against M. Theotokis, who was then President of the Council of Ministers. A portion of the Greek press asked for my judgment in the matter, but I considered that for several reasons, and especially that of my own religion, it was a question altogether outside my competence. Nevertheless I did my best to explain this popular outburst, which was caused by the devotion of the Greek public to the language of their ancestors, of the Apostles and the Fathers of the Greek Church.

While I continued to reside at Brussels, the two sons of Damat Mahmoud—Prince Saba Eddine and Prince Lutfullah—returned from Egypt and settled in Paris, where they were planning the calling of a congress to discuss the situation of Turkey. They wanted me to take part in this, and Prince Lutfullah came to Brussels to see me on the matter. I was willing to take part in the congress on certain conditions—namely, that all the ethnical elements in Turkey should be represented, so that the desiderata of all the people of the Empire might be formulated. It was essential, in my opinion, to show that those who were against Abd-ul-Hamid were acting simply and solely with a view to creating a national Government that should be equally impartial and beneficent to all the peoples of the Empire. My second condition was that the Powers signatory of the Treaties of Paris and Berlin should know that in the eyes of the Ottoman people they had pledged their honour concerning the adoption of reforms for the good of the Empire. If the aid of Europe were invoked, the congress might be of some value, but if it stopped at the mere expression of opinions and nothing more was done, I could not see any use in it. The Young Turks professed to consider it humiliating to ask for aid from the Powers in what they ought to be able to do themselves. My conditions were, however, accepted, and I came to Paris. There was difficulty at first because the French Government, in consequence of measures taken by the Turkish Ambassador, refused permission to hold the congress. This difficulty was removed by the hospitality of M. Lefeuvre, who placed his own apartment in the Avenue du Trocadéro at our disposal. At the last moment M. Waldeck-Rousseau, President of the Council and Minister of the Interior, withdrew the opposition, but as all arrangements had been made, the first meeting took place in the large drawing-room of M. Lefeuvre. Subsequent meetings took place at the house of Prince Saba Eddine, in the Boulevard Malesherbes, where some forty delegates, representing all the races of the Turkish Empire, continued to sit for several days.

The first question discussed was to define the vice in the government of Abd-ul-Hamid, and to seek for a remedy by legal means and by the sympathy of the Liberal Powers. But the congress soon found itself confronted by difficulties arising from two currents of opinion totally opposed and equally Utopian. The one came from the Young Turks, the other from the Armenians. The group of Young Turks presided over by Ahmed Riza (later President of the Chamber and Senator) insisted on the organisation of a central and centralising power at Constantinople in the interests of the purely Turkish element. The Armenians, on the contrary, aimed at the organisation of local government independent of the central administration, and based solely upon foreign protection in accordance with Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin (which insisted upon the Turkish Government taking measures, of which the Powers were to be kept advised, for the protection of the Armenians against the Kurds and Circassians). The majority of the Congress strenuously opposed the contentions of the Young Turks, who were already betraying their narrow and curious idea of unifying all the races of the Empire by means of strong action by the Central Government. The Armenians, however, had no more success with their ideas, which were unrealisable merely on account of their social and geographical position in the Empire, in which the success of a local government would absolutely depend on the organisation of a well-intentioned central Government in harmony with them and favourable to their development. After long and excited discussions the majority of the Congress agreed upon an appeal to the Powers for a régime consonant with the principles of the Constitution to embrace all the ethnical elements of Turkey, guaranteeing them justice and liberty and the maintenance of their national rights. The minority, consisting of those who later on led the revolutionary movement in Turkey, opposed this resolution, and had a counter-resolution inserted in the final *procès-verbal.* This profession of faith of the Young Turks, it seems to me, was the basis of the programme carried out later on by the Committee of Union and Progress.

After the Congress, without interrupting my residence at Brussels, I kept a *pied-à-terre* in Paris, where, in association with the two Princes and other political friends, I continued to push plans for reforms, which I must say were based on and supported by nothing but our own hopes. Some of the partisans of our cause had settled at Folkestone, where they published the Turkish journal *Osmanli.* It was about this period that I came to know M. de Blowitz, the famous correspondent of the *Times*, and his able assistant, my good friend, W. Morton Fullerton, who both showed great and sympathetic interest in me and in my cause, the Paris office of the *Times* being almost a second headquarters for me at that time. De Blowitz also recommended me to his adopted son, Stephan Lauzanne, who was at the time in charge of the office of the *Matin* in London, and who always gave me a cordial welcome when I was in England.

Turkish affairs passed from bad to worse, and the danger of a catastrophe seemed to be imminent. All our thoughts were bent upon trying to find a remedy. Our views on the subject were divided, because while some were disposed towards violent measures and the raising of revolution in the country, others were in favour of prudent but slow measures which could not give immediate results. I myself was in favour of action that would have the effect of giving the alarm and attracting the attention of Europe, by which means the Sultan would be forced to come to terms without the country being too much upset. For this it was only necessary to take possession of a dominant position, like Salonica, for example, or Bolayir, which is the key to the Dardanelles, with an armed force, and from there impose conditions on the Sultan. Marshal Redjeb Pasha, commander of the Army of the Tripolitain, seemed just the man for such a move. Possessing courage worthy of an Albanian, as he was, he was also known to be of high patriotism. If he seized Salonica with a portion of his army, he would draw to his side all his fellow Albanians; while if he disembarked at Bolayir by the Gulf of Saros, using the ascendancy he had over the Turkish Army, he would become master of the strongest military position that Turkey possessed. Through a confidential correspondence I had with him we received the assurance that if the means of transport were obtained, the Marshal would be ready to carry out this plan. Our next move was to secure the material means for the success of our enterprise and to assure in advance the sympathetic support of the Powers interested in the maintenance of Turkey, especially that of Great Britain.

I had an interview with Sir Edmund Monson in Paris, and explained the matter to him, telling him that the success of this last attempt to assure the existence of Turkey depended on the interest that the British Government might show in it. After thinking it all over, the Ambassador sat down and wrote two personal letters on the spot—one for the Foreign Office and the other for Lord Onslow, then Under-Secretary for India, asking him to put me in touch with Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, who was on the point of leaving for the Cape, and might therefore be difficult to get hold of. I left for London the same day, and immediately on my arrival handed my letters to the Foreign Office and Lord Onslow. Lord Lansdowne, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, happened to be at Sandringham with the King, who had as his guest the German Emperor ; but in spite of his absence, I met with just the same business precision and quickness as were shown by Sir Edmond Monson. The following day Lord Sanderson, Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, invited me to go and see him at his private house, and I gave him a detailed explanation of our proposed course of action and of the nature of the protection which we asked for from the British Government, which was simply to protect us against any action that Russia might bring to bear to prevent the success of our patriotic action. Lord Sanderson promised to get into communication with his chief and let me know his decision. In less than two days I received a second invitation from the Under-Secretary to go to his house, and he then read me the letter Lord Lansdowne had written him on the subject. This gave a promise of support which was worthy of the traditional policy of Great Britain, though it was surrounded with a natural reserve dictated by the fact that our coup was not yet a *fait accompli*. I was greatly encouraged, and with the consent of Lord Sanderson I took a copy of the Minister's letter, which was in French, to show to my co-workers. As I told Lord Sanderson I was going to Egypt, it was understood that Lord Cromer should be advised of my visit in order that he too might be put *au courant* of our enterprise, which would have an important effect on Eastern affairs generally, and give his advice.

I also saw Lord Onslow, but my interview with his colleague of the Foreign Office had given me the weapons I needed.

Lord Cromer at first startled me at our meeting in Cairo with the remark that there was now no Turkish question, but I insisted that the Turkish question was, if anything, more pressing than ever. I pointed out the importance of having a Turkey strong but friendly, if only in the interests of British policy in Egypt, which had been the great work and was then the sole preoccupation of the distinguished Proconsul. Finally he agreed with this view of the matter, and recognised the advantage of aiding in the realisation of reforms which would assure the maintenance of the Empire, and he promised me that he would reply to the Foreign Office in this sense.

I now sent for a compatriot of mine, named Jaffre Brejdani, who had left Constantinople after my departure, and was staying at an Albanian *téké,* or monastery, in Greece, awaiting instructions. I sent him to Tripoli to see Redjeb Pasha, whose confidence he enjoyed, and come to an arrangement with him as to what it would be necessary to do. Leaving Cairo again to return to London, at Marseilles I read in the Paris newspapers the death at Brussels of Damat Mahmoud Pasha. In Paris I found the two Princes naturally very much upset at their father's death, but nevertheless we went to London together and there made the necessary financial arrangements for our enterprise. We had now only to find the boats. Prince Saba-Eddine had assured me that three Greek boats, the tonnage and dimensions of which he had given me, were already chartered, and that we had only to go to Athens to sign the agreement and see them leave for Tripoli. Unfortunately, when I got to Athens I found out that all that had been told me about these boats resolved itself into mere promises and vague suggestions; there were no boats and there was no proper understanding. We had to begin the work of getting transports all over again, and this work and other negotiations took such a long time that the period when Redjeb Pasha could take his troops out of the capital for manœuvres was past, the season being too advanced.

While I was in Egypt, Musurus Bey Ghikis and his wife, desirous of profiting by my stay, came to spend some time there with me; he now joined me at Athens, and took part in all the work devoted to this unfortunately abortive affair. My relations with the members of the Greek Government, and in general with all the Greeks, were so cordial, that from this point of view I had great pleasure from my stay in Athens. The King, whom I had seen some months previously in Paris, and to whom I had spoken about our plan, was consequently aware of the object of my visit to his capital. But in order that my presence should not arouse suspicion, it was thought best that I should live in retirement, and so I stayed under an assumed foreign name at the house of an officer who was also a deputy. This life in disguise, however, in a city where I could hardly go into the streets without being recognised, irritated me, and made me hasten my business in order either to be able to return to my normal individuality or to leave the city.

From Athens I went to Naples to meet Jaffre Brejdani, who had returned from Tripoli, and learn from him the real feelings of my friend, Redjeb Pasha, so as to be able to lay the ground better for the future. The efforts I had put forth in this enterprise that had proved so disappointing to me had somewhat undermined my strength, and I felt the need of a period of rest, which I proceeded to take in this beautiful country. During my stay at Naples took place the visits of King Edward and of the Crown Prince of Germany and one of his brothers. These royal visits and the presence of the British Fleet lent great animation to the town, which was beautiful in its spring vesture, and a particularly attractive festivity at which I was present was the gala performance given at the San Carlo Theatre in honour of King Edward, the German Princes, accompanied by the Duke of the Abruzzi, being also present. Edward VII was enthusiastically acclaimed when he appeared in the royal box with Tittoni, then Prefect of Naples.

Every time I went to Rome and Naples, the Albanians of Calabria and other parts round Naples, who had been settled there since the death of Scanderbeg, retaining both their language and their national habits, and who now formed a colony of some 200,000 souls, used to come and see me and discuss the interests of the country which they still had so much at heart, feeling sure as they did of the sympathetic support in these sentiments of their adopted country. The Albanian colony of Sicily also wanted to see me, and pressed me to go and spend some time with them. Accordingly I went to Palermo, passing by Messina, where I spent several days, and I shall never forget the cordial reception of which I was made the object at Palermo. There was a fête every evening, and among other festivities I was invited to the gala performance at the opera for Queen Amalie of Portugal, who was on her way back from a visit to Egypt with her two sons. The most important centre of the Albanians in Sicily is Piana dei Greci, on a height some twenty miles from Palermo. I was invited there, and was received just as if I had been in my own country, most of the notables of the other Albanian centres being assembled to meet me. It was a touching scene when almost the entire population of women and children, attired in Albanian national costumes, and accompanied by bands, ran towards us to touch our clothes as if we were a portion of the beloved native soil, and my companion Jaffre was moved to tears.

I spent a few weeks at Naples on my return for a rest, and from there I went again to Rome, where I passed most of the summer. While I was in the Eternal City, Pope Leo XIII fell ill, and every one watched the progress of the august patient's illness with interest and sympathy, though his great age from the beginning left little room for hope. The Conclave after his death lasted longer than usual, and gave rise to comments and rumours of the most contradictory character. The members of the Conclave were, it appeared, very divided, and foreign influence—especially that of Austria-Hungary—played a great rôle in the attempt to set aside the candidature of Rampolla. People had begun to think the Conclave would never end, when, one day, while I was taking a walk in the square before St. Peter's, the famous chimney of the Vatican began suddenly to smoke, giving the signal of the election. The square was immediately filled with people, who cheered the elect of the Holy Ghost without knowing who he was. But a little later, from one of the balconies of the Basilica, which was covered with a velvet canopy, Pius X, Patriarch of Venice, was proclaimed to the people who had already acclaimed him.

One of my old Albanian friends, Said Effendi, came to see me at Rome on the question of going to Tripoli to arrive at an understanding with Marshal Redjeb Pasha. He returned from Tripoli a little while later very much exhausted by an illness from which he had long been suffering. We got the best doctors in Rome for him, but his malady was incurable. He recovered his strength a little, and went home to his native country of Dibra, where he died a few days after his arrival.

The lack of agreement among the Turkish reformers which had become manifest during the Paris Congress prevented any possibility of united political action likely to give reason to hope for a change in Turkish affairs. On the other hand, the troubles in Macedonia increased, and the directors of Turkish policy at Constantinople, instead of arriving at an understanding with the Powers which would have been interested in maintaining Turkish integrity, adopted a mischievous policy which drove the people to acts of desperation. Having lost all hope of doing anything salutary for Turkey, all my efforts, as well as those of Redjeb Pasha and other Albanian patriots, were devoted to the task of trying to save Albania from the disaster which we now realised was inevitable. From this period until 1908 I spent most of my time in Brussels, though I made several journeys to Greece, Italy, and England on missions connected with the service of my country, as I shall explain in the chapter devoted to the Albanian question.

I now heard from my friends at Constantinople that another attempt was to be made on my life, an individual having been sent to Belgium for that purpose, accompanied by the Turkish Vice-Consul at Corfu, who, knowing me, was to point me out to the assassin. I informed M. Delatour, the chief of police, of the matter, and he was very kind and attentive, having me followed by members of the force whenever I went out, while I was put into touch with an officer whom I could call upon at the shortest notice should I need him. Soon after receiving this unpleasant information from Turkey, I was annoyed by a man of foreign aspect who spent days in walking up and down the Avenue Louise between my house and the Place Stéphanie. One day, unable to bear it any longer, I slipped a revolver into my pocket, went out, and walked towards this man, followed by a police officer to whom I had communicated my suspicions. The fellow, seeing us approach, turned away and walked off, and I was never troubled with him any more.

Returning from Greece on the last occasion, I again spent some time at Naples and then went on to Switzerland, where at Leysin my son Djevdad, who was suffering from tuberculosis, was passing the winter. I returned to Paris, where I took an apartment in the Rue Mont-Thabor, and it was while I was here that Muhijeddin Bey, the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires, woke me up at one o'clock on the morning of July 22nd to show me a telegram from the Sultan to the following purport:—

"If time had allowed (the telegram ran) I would have sent my confidential man, Ilias Bey, to Ismail Kemal Bey to confer with him as to what had best be done at this critical juncture. Go to him immediately and beg him to give you his written opinion, which you will forward to me by telegraph."

This was in consequence of the massacres that had taken place and the decision taken by Europe regarding the organisation of Macedonia, which seemed to the Albanians likely to compromise their national unity. Ten thousand armed Albanians had met at Ferizovic on July 15th, 1908, and sent the Sultan a famous telegram, which had produced a greater impression on him than the remonstrances of all the Turks or all the diplomatic representations of Europe.

I handed the Sultan's representative my reply, which advised His Majesty without a moment's delay to promulgate the Constitution, that being the only efficacious remedy and the only sure way of grouping round his throne all the peoples of the Empire. And as I now understood the mentality and morality of the Young Turks, as well as their motive for the political course they were pursuing, I also recommended His Majesty to take all necessary measures to prevent aggression on the part of the adventurers in power, and to attract to himself, without their intervention, the confidence and help of the Albanian people. Two days later the Constitution was promulgated, and, in obedience to a fresh order of the Sultan, a report setting forth my plan, which I had laid before the Chargé d'Affaires, was forwarded to the Sovereign by the same channel.

Munir Pasha, the Ambassador in Paris, was away at Kustendje on a Government mission when he learned of the revolution at Constantinople. He returned to Paris at once, and communicated to me a request from Kiamil Pasha that I should return to Turkey. I replied that I would not return until the sentence against me had been annulled and I was restored to all my civil rights. Going to London immediately afterwards, I received an official notification from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through the Ambassador, of the annulment of the judgment against me and my restitution and reintegration to my rights. About this time the *Standard* published a telegram from Italy which stated that some two to three thousand Albanians had arrived at Bari to meet me and escort me to Valona. On the following day I received a telegram, signed by a number of Albanian notables, in which in the name of all my compatriots they invited me to go to Valona at once and accept the mission of being their representative at the Chamber which was to be convoked.

Among others who had left Constantinople now that the Young Turks were in power was Izzet Pasha, who bought a boat and escaped on it, flying the British flag. One day, as I was dining at the Hotel Cecil in company with a French friend, Madame Muraur, to my great surprise Izzet Pasha walked in and took a seat at the table next to me. He recognised me also, and the next day he left the hotel; but, on my inquiring for him at the office, I found that he was unknown, having registered under an Italian pseudonym. It got abroad somehow that Izzet was in London and that I had recognised him, and the next day, which I happened to be spending at Hastings, the hotel was beseiged by journalists asking for me. On my return in the evening I was asked to communicate by telephone with the *Daily Mail,* which I did, and it was on that occasion that I first met Mr. William Maxwell, the correspondent of that paper. Mr. Maxwell traced Izzet Pasha to a neighbouring hotel, and he returned to tell me that Izzet was anxious to meet me. We did meet, and, in fact, the journalist and I were entertained at luncheon a day or two later by the Sultan's ex-favourite.

I went back to Albania, in accordance with the wish of my compatriots, and at Athens, where I stayed a few days *en route,* I was joined by the chieftain of the Mirdites, Prink Doda Pasha. He accompanied me as far as Valona, whence he returned to his native country, which he had not seen for a number of years, having been forced at first to live at Kastamounia and then transferred to Constantinople, where he was attached to the Palace with the rank of General of Brigade in the Sultan's Albanian Guards.

At Corfu all the notables of my native country came to meet me, and we went together to Valona. A few days later my three sons who had remained in Paris, as well as my eldest son, who had spent seven years of exile at Bitlis, came and joined me. While I was at Valona two important political events took place, which threw considerable consternation among the public of the East, especially in Albania. Austria proclaimed the annexation pure and simple of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Bulgaria declared her independence. I was puzzled to know what would be the attitude of the officers of the Turkish Army representing the Committee of Union and Progress in face of these serious events. The country, greatly shaken, manifested frank indignation against Austria, which it showed by entirely boycotting that country commercially. But the representatives of the Committee did no more than announce that there was nothing extraordinary in these events, which were simply the realisation of the legitimate aspirations of the peoples! Essad Pasha, who was on his way to Salonica to present his submission to the Central Committee sitting there, came to see me, and I asked him to convey my personal views on the matter to the committee, and to tell those who were thus taking a pride in this change of régime, that the consequences for the future of the Empire would be very serious if these political changes were accepted. A few days later Essad Pasha wrote me saying the committee was not at all disposed to offer any resistance in the matter. A little later I learned from a reliable source what the directing idea of the committee was, and how they had contrived to bring about this political change. Their object was to ensure the triple advantage of obtaining popularity for themselves throughout the country, discrediting the former Statesmen, of whom they wanted to get rid at all costs, and using this political liquidation as a means of ridding the country of foreign influence, so as to be able to apply their policy of racial unification with the utmost vigour.

The electoral campaign followed upon these events, and a lively competition took place between the two cousins, Omer Pasha and Aziz Pasha Virione, for the candidature of second deputy of Berat, of which I had been unanimously elected the first member. A few days before the close of the poll, Suleyman Bey Sakram came to see me, and told me confidentially that he had come to Valona in company with an officer who had been sent by the Central Committee of Salonica to take all necessary measures to prevent my election. This seemed to me so incredible, that I attributed it to a manœuvre on the part of my visitor in order to get his brother, Aridin Bey, accepted as candidate, as he urged me to take him as my colleague. But when I was shown a copy of the instructions, I had no further doubt on the matter, and before he left, the officer in question came to see me and confirmed the fact, making me his excuses. Not only that, but a military doctor, who also represented the committee, and had been given similar instructions, was told that if my election could not be prevented, he was to find out from me what was my political programme. When he came to tell me this, I replied that my political views were surely clear enough from the acts of my whole life, and that it would be more proper for me to ask what were the political views of those who were so interrogating me.

I left Valona for Constantinople, but made a detour via Rome, Venice, Buda-Pesth, Bucharest, and Constanza. During the journey from Italy to Hungary a pleasant incident was my meeting with the charming Mme. Frankfurten, wife of the American director of the Austrian Lloyd Co., who took me to her house in Buda-Pesth for lunch, and with whom I spent a day seeing the sights of the city, a pleasure not less real because her motive was partly to interest me in the Austrian Lloyd Company, which was suffering severely from the boycott of Turkey.

CHAPTER XVIII

1908—1909

Return to Constantinople, and my reception there—Kiamil Pasha's Vizierate—Young Turk intrigues—The Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria questions, and my work on them—The plot against Kiamil Pasha—Hussein Hilmi Pasha Grand Vizier—Russian pretensions—Arbitrary acts of the new Government—Young Turk intimidation—Growing discontent which at last bursts—The military rebellion of April 13th, and my part in it—A memorable day.

I found on my arrival at Constantinople (in November, 1908) that the Young Turks had succeeded in gaining very great power and influence. They did their best to prevent my arrival and reception having any official character, but, in spite of their efforts, the welcome accorded me by the Albanian colony and by my personal friends was a flattering and brilliant one. A procession with music met me and conducted me to the Albanian Club, where a number of patriotic speeches were delivered. Next day the Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, sent word that he would like to meet me as soon as possible. At our first interview I told him all I had learned about the burning questions of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the independence of Bulgaria in connection with the manœuvres of the Young Turk Committee. Kiamil Pasha told me he had been nourishing the project of having me in the Ministry as Minister for Foreign Affairs. Though I accepted this offer in principle, I was anxious that, before any such change took place, the Grand Vizier's position should be strengthened by a vote of the Chamber following the declaration of policy that he was going to make.

During the first few days the *doyen* among the members acted as President of the Chamber, and the assembly then proceeded to elect a president and other officers. A large proportion of the deputies were in favour of my candidature, in spite of my discouraging this in view of the Grand Vizier's intentions with regard to me, and although the Young Turk leaders were opposed to me. Finally I had to announce in open sitting that I could not accept the candidature. The Committee's candidate, Ahmed Riza, was elected president by a large majority.

Kiamil Pasha put together the essential points of his declaration of policy, and asked Zohrab Effendi, an Armenian deputy, and myself to study it with him and help him draw up the completed text. As we were of the opinion that it was necessary above all to insist on the necessity of changing the Constitution and emphasising the question of the National Sovereignty, the Grand Vizier entrusted us with the entire work. We spent two days and nights on the task, which, when completed, Kiamil Pasha accepted in its entirety, and a few days later our programme was read in the Chamber on behalf of the Grand Vizier, whose great age did not permit him to do this, by the Under-Secretary of State of the Grand Vizierate. The declaration caused a profound sensation, and was the occasion of an absolute ovation for the Grand Vizier, who was in the tribune beside the reader.

But in spite of the vote of confidence and of the great popularity which Kiamil Pasha enjoyed at this time, the Young Turk leaders did all they could to diminish the Grand Vizier's authority and increase their own influence. Two or three of them stayed at the Palace day and night in order to watch the acts and movements of the Sultan, and especially to take note of his visitors. The Parliament House was guarded by the three battalions of Chasseurs brought from Salonica with the express intention of threatening those who opposed the Young Turks. All sorts of intrigues were started against Kiamil Pasha, and several unpleasant incidents occurred showing the state of tension that existed, and presaging the open hostility that was soon to break out.

Kiamil Pasha was certainly to blame for not, at the beginning, taking the severe measures necessary in the interests of public order to dissolve the Committee and thus destroy the mischievous influence they were exercising on public life. Once the desired change had been brought about by the action of this Committee, there was no further reason for its continued existence, and it became an anomaly in a Constitutional State. Naturally we never thought it capable of seizing the absolute power, and the Grand Vizier at this time used it as a weapon of defence against the Sultan. He continued his negotiations on the questions of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Bulgaria, and made use of my aid and counsel as if I were actually Minister. Kiamil Pasha had informed Tewfik Pasha, the holder of the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, that he wanted him to vacate the post in my favour. He very amiably consented to retire, and I owe it to him to say that he never showed the slightest animosity or ill-feeling towards me in the matter.

In order to settle the Bosnia-Herzegovina question, we had decided to accept the situation created by Austria-Hungary on condition that that Government undertook to renew the guarantee of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire by a protocol to be submitted to the other Powers who had signed the Treaties of Paris and Berlin. My negotiations in the matter were mostly with Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, who took the leading part in the affair beside his Austro-Hungarian colleague. He approved our suggestions, and, a few days after I had presented them, he sent his secretary to tell me they were accepted, and Pallavicini, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, received instructions from his Government to sign the protocol.

The negotiations on this and the Bulgarian question were following their normal course and were approaching a satisfactory conclusion, but Kiamil Pasha considered it essential that the Cabinet should be definitely constituted before they were terminated. I myself was of opinion that before we went any further we should assure ourselves of a strong and reliable Minister of War and Minister of Marine, so that in case of any trouble we should be sure of the support of these two services. I considered the person best suited to take the portfolio of war, and one in whom we could place absolute confidence, was Nazim Pasha, who had recently returned from exile and been appointed commander of the Second Army Corps, with headquarters at Andrianople. As Kiamil Pasha did not know him personally, we decided to ask Musurus Bey to go to see the General at Andrianople, but it chanced that Nazim Pasha, in the course of a tour of inspection of the troops under his command, had to pass by Constantinople, and so we took advantage of the fact to present him to Kiamil Pasha. He gave all the necessary guarantees and was appointed Minister for War.

The appointment to this post of a man of the calibre of Nazim Pasha, and also the fact that Kiamil Pasha had taken measures to have the troops from Salonica returned to that city, ostensibly to replace other troops that had been moved to frontier stations, alarmed the Committee. The Minister of Marine had already resigned, but his resignation had not been accepted by the Grand Vizier.

Now Hussein Hilmi, Minister of the Interior, at a meeting of the Ministerial Council, handed in his resignation, saying that he could not form part of a Cabinet in which the President made such changes without consulting his colleagues. Several interpellations on the matter were presented in the Chamber. Kiamil Pasha was asked to come immediately and reply, and Enver Bey and the other officers who were playing a leading rôle on the Committee, armed with revolvers and other weapons, swarmed in the lobbies and threatened the deputies to force them to vote against Kiamil Pasha. At the same time other chiefs of the Committee in Parliament used all manner of threats against their colleagues. These threats reached such a point that Zohrab Bey, the Armenian deputy, who had been talking to Talaat Bey, the Young Turk leader, came to me in fright and begged me in the public interest, and even in that of Kiamil Pasha himself, not to oppose this movement. I told him it was impossible for me to change my opinions and vote against Kiamil Pasha. He ended by declaring that matters had gone so far that the Armenians were threatened with massacre. The naval officers on the vessels in the harbour also sent a telegram of protest to the Chamber threatening to fire on the city.

As when the message reached him Kiamil Pasha was in conference with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, he replied by letter that he could not go to the Chamber at once, and asked that the interpellations should be postponed to another day. The Unionists, nevertheless, insisted on getting a vote of no confidence in the Grand Vizier. The fight was a bitter one, but Kiamil Pasha's enemies were so violent that, in spite of the proceeding being so contrary to the Constitution and even the regulations of the Chamber, the great majority had to accept the resolution concerning his revocation. After registering my protest against these proceedings, I voted for Kiamil Pasha in an *ordre du jour*, which only seven of my colleagues had the courage to sign. The same evening Ahmed Riza went to the Palace, escorted by a company of troops, and forced the Sultan to sanction the revocation of Kiamil Pasha.

Hussein Hilmi Pasha was at once appointed Grand Vizier, and the next day he took possession of his post at the Porte, where the Imperial *Hatt* was read appointing him in the place of Kiamil Pasha—a most unconstitutional act. He presented himself to the Chamber with his Cabinet formed, read his programme, and received a vote of confidence. Mine was almost the only vote in opposition—an opposition which I based upon the fact that the Minister for War, Aleza Pasha, who had held the post in the former administration, had merited dismissal from his office through his having written a letter to Kiamil Pasha declaring that if he was desired to mobilise the army against Bulgaria, he would not take the responsibility, but would prefer to resign (which he forthwith did, being appointed High Commissioner in Egypt), and that, therefore, he was unsuited to fill the post again.

As soon as he was installed, the new Grand Vizier took up the negotiations with the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador and with the representative of Bulgaria. A protocol was drawn up and signed by the delegates on both sides, and was submitted to the Chamber to be approved before submission to the Sultan. The protocol accepted the annexation of the two provinces on condition that the Caliphate of the Sultan over the Mussulmans of the country should be recognised, and that a sum of £T2,500,000 should be paid as the equivalent in value of the State domains and vakoufs. The independence of Bulgaria and the incorporation with that principality of the autonomous province of Eastern Roumelia were also recognised in virtue of the payment of a sum representing the capitalisation of the war indemnity which Turkey was paying to Russia. At the Grand Vizier's request the Chamber held a sitting in secret committee, when, after hearing the various documents read, the Grand Vizier's exposé and the explanations of Gabriel Naroudunkian Effendi, in his capacity as delegate of the Porte, we asked that copies of the protocol should be printed and distributed among the deputies. But the Grand Vizier opposed this, which would have been the proper procedure, and insisted that the Chamber should examine and vote the protocol at that sitting.

Since I, as I have already said, was in Kiamil Pasha's time the virtual negotiator of this question, and had succeeded in obtaining from Austria-Hungary the signature of a treaty by which that country would recognise the retrocession of the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar and guarantee it against any aggression, I spoke on the matter, and opposed the arrangement as being contrary to the interests of the Empire. I knew very well that the retrocession of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Turkey would be neither possible nor even useful, but at the same time I felt that to abandon the Sovereign rights over a portion of the Empire in consideration of a pecuniary indemnity, no matter what form it took, was an act dishonourable to the Sovereignty of the Sultan and a dangerous precedent for the integrity of the Empire, and it was to counteract this danger that I worked to obtain in exchange for the cession of these provinces an undertaking from Austria-Hungary to guarantee the Sanjak of Novi-Bazar, as an integral part of the Empire, against all aggression. This arrangement between the two States, when submitted to and accepted by the Powers who had signed the Treaties of Paris and Berlin, would constitute the renewal of their collective guarantee of the integrity of the Empire.

In making known my views on this subject, I insisted on the necessity of obtaining these guarantees by the signature of the first protocol, and as proof of the prejudice which the new arrangement as now submitted might have on the future of the Empire, I brought to the notice of the Chamber the aims of Russia, which that Power was not behindhand in making known on this occasion. I had in my possession copies of two letters—one from Turham Pasha, containing proposals made by Tcharikoff, *gérant* of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs there, and the other from Naoum Pasha, Ambassador in Paris, relating proposals made by M. Isvolsky, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, during a stay he made in Paris—and I read these to the Chamber. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and his *gérant*, as compensation for this territorial acquisition by Austria-Hungary, asked for nothing less than the opening of the straits of the Bosphorous and the Dardanelles to the Russian Fleet, with the right to hold a point on the straits which would give them the means of defending themselves!

As to Bulgaria, I also insisted on the solution of the problem which I had planned, and which Kiamil Pasha had accepted—the recognition of Bulgaria's independence with the incorporation of Eastern Roumelia, but on condition that this latter province should be proclaimed neutral under the guarantee of the Powers. This arrangement, while not affecting the sovereignty of Bulgaria, had this advantage, that it would have made all conflict between the two States impossible.

These explanations, and the revelations as to Russia's intrigue, produced such an impression on my colleagues, that the protocol would have been thrown out had not Rifaat Pasha and Gabriel Effendi used all the sophistical arguments they could command to make their hearers believe that the new régime would dispense the Empire from all need of foreign guarantees, and that the Cabinet would have insurmountable difficulties to face if the protocol were not at once voted.

I had thus the satisfaction of having fulfilled my last patriotic duty, though, unfortunately, it was one more chance lost, since the protocol was voted without any amendment by an overwhelming majority.

The arbitrary acts of the new Cabinet, and the Committee's interference in all departments of the Government, provoked a feeling of general discontent which increased daily until it reached really alarming proportions. The first measures submitted to the Chamber by the Government were the law against the bands in Macedonia and in the other parts of European Turkey, and the law on corporal punishment, which ordained the bastinado for certain delinquencies, such as vagrancy.

I combated both measures as being impolitic and inhuman. As regarded the flogging, it seemed to me a singularly retrograde law in a country which had joined the concert of the European Powers and was supposed to be modelling its customs upon those of liberal countries. The drastic law upon the bands was even more barbarous, since it enacted that if any one member of a family joined these bands, the whole family should be exiled and their goods confiscated ; so that a whole village might be penalised for the act of one member of the community. The main object of the Committee in making this law was simply to get the entire power into their own hands in order to act with severity against the different nations, especially the Albanians.

Public indignation against these enactments rose to great heights, and the newspapers began to use strong language in their attacks against the Committee. The latter, seeing the danger from this public discontent, had recourse to grave acts of intimidation. The first of these was the assassination of the chief editor of one of the opposition papers, Hassan Femi. An imposing popular demonstration took place at the funeral of this victim of the so-called Liberal régime of the Young Turks, the public being roused to fury as much by the attitude of the authorities and the police as by the murder itself. One might have thought the whole of Constantinople was attending this funeral in order to protest against those who were trying thus to stifle the voice of liberty by criminal means.

An incident which might have had very grave consequences took place just as the funeral procession was leaving for the Cathedral of St. Sophia. The carriage of the Grand Vizier approached, and, instead of waiting for it to pass, the Grand Vizier tried to cut through the procession. Taking this as an intentional insult, the people were roused to a pitch of fury, cries of " Death to him ! " were raised, and it would probably have gone badly with Hussein Hilmi if I had not stood between him and the mob and implored them to keep calm. We succeeded in diverting the Grand Vizier's carriage into another direction, and the funeral procession continued on its way.

The political atmosphere became more and more threatening, and the Grand Vizier, as well as the other chiefs of the Committee, began to realise the danger surrounding them. One day, as I was going into the Chamber, I met Talaat Bey coming out. He stopped me and spoke about the condition of affairs, saying that we must all concert to find a remedy. The following Friday evening a messenger brought me an urgent letter from the Grand Vizier asking me to go and see him that same evening and take with me Mefid Bey and Zohrab Effendi and any other adherents of our cause whom I might choose. The hour was late, and the general situation did not encourage me to make this visit at such an hour, so I did not go. The next morning I got Mefid Bey to go and see the Grand Vizier and explain the reasons why I had not gone to him and ask whether he still wished to see me and on what business. Some hours later the Grand Vizier himself came to the Chamber to see me and pressed me to go and call on him the next evening, taking with me such of my colleagues as I chose. On the Sunday evening therefore, I went to the private residence of the Grand Vizier at Chichli, accompanied by Mefid Bey. Hussein Hilmi Pasha told us the Ministry realised that we were probably on the brink of serious events which, if they were not averted, might bring about the downfall of the Constitutional régime. He had sent for me and my friends because we, being the staunchest advocates of the Liberal Government, would suffer particularly from a reaction, and he appealed to us to help them find a remedy for the present state of affairs. He added some personal compliments to myself, saying he had always nurtured a hope of having me as a colleague, and that for that reason he had himself kept the Ministry of the Interior, but that he had never offered me the portfolio, as he had understood from Kiamil Pasha that I would not be willing to accept it. I replied that we were on our side thoroughly aware of the grave danger threatening the country, but that, as it was the Committee and the new Government representing it that had brought things to this pass, it was for them and not for us to seek for the remedy. If they could decide on a programme likely to bring about improvement, if they would submit it to us and we agreed upon it, we would do everything in our power to help them to improve the situation. The Grand Vizier seemed to be satisfied with this statement of our position, and said he would immediately consult with Talaat Bey and the other chiefs of the Committee, and that they would probably ask us to meet again to come to some arrangement.

Two days later (on Tuesday, April 13th, 1909) I was awakened early in the morning to learn that the guardian of the Galata Bridge had come to say he had an urgent and serious communication to make to me. I received him at once, and he told me that soldiers had been crossing the bridge all night, and that the entire army had marched in the direction of the Chamber, inviting all those who had respect for religion and love of the country to follow them. Thinking the man must be a prey to some illusion or had perhaps gone quite mad, I sent to make inquiries at the *corps de garde* of the quarter. I received confirmation of the news, and immediately left for the Chamber with my two sons. At the entrance to the bridge I stopped at the headquarters of the *corps de garde* of Galata in order to get more precise information and to find out if circulation was free on the bridge and in the adjoining streets. Here I was joined by Rifaat Bey, my colleague in the Chamber representing Antioch. We soon realised the full nature of this astounding revolt of the army. Among the ringleaders, as we found out afterwards, were the very regiments of Chasseurs which the Committee had brought from Salonica for their own aggressive purposes.

The neighbourhood of the Chamber and the building itself were filled with troops. There were about 25,000 of them outside, while the hall and galleries of the Chamber were crowded with soldiers, all armed, without a single officer, and with a good sprinkling of the public. The Government and the representatives of the Committee had fled, as had also Ahmed Riza, the President of the Chamber. Such of the deputies as were present, numbering about sixty, met in the Chamber, where the Sheik-ul-Islam, with the Ulemas supporting him, took up their positions on the Ministerial benches. The debating-hall was also invaded by public and soldiers. Although their attitude was neither troublesome nor threatening, this invasion was very derogatory to the dignity of Parliament. On my requesting the public to withdraw, they did so quietly and respectfully; but the soldiers, who were the leaders of the movement, refused to do so, saying they would keep quiet in a corner of the Chamber in order to follow the debate, and would do no harm. At the instigation of his companions, the youngest of the Ulemas, named Rassim Effendi, went into the tribune and delivered a violent speech against the Committee, the President of the Chamber, and their adherents, describing their acts and policy as anti-religious, anti-patriotic, and contrary to morality and the decency dictated by religion and the traditions of national life. After this attack we debated the matter.

I was the first to speak, and I said that we were face to face with a movement which, though it arose from no evil intention towards the Constitutional régime or hostility to the Chamber, was nevertheless, in the way it was carried out, a danger for public order and for the prestige of the State. It was clear, I added, that at the moment there was no other authority capable of acting in this emergency except the national representatives, and our first duty was therefore to declare the fall of the Cabinet, which had by its arbitrary acts provoked this regrettable movement, and by its lack of foresight had permitted the army of the capital to show its indignation in a manner so incompatible with military duty and discipline. Thereupon a rather confused discussion took place between the deputies, which was drawn out to a length that they ought never to have permitted themselves in view of the gravity of the situation. This long debate irritated the soldiers, and a few of them made sarcastic remarks to the deputies on their inability to come to a conclusion. Finally we decided to form a deputation to go to the Palace and submit to the Sultan the resolution to dismiss the old Cabinet and form a new one, and also our desire that a general amnesty should be granted to all who had taken part in the movement. This we had to promise the soldiers in order to prevent further trouble. The deputation was composed of the Sheik-ul-Islam, myself, and nine other deputies.

We started off in carriages, the Sheik-ul-Islam leading, and passed through the masses of troops without any hindrance. When we thought we had reached the end of the lines and groups of soldiers, we were suddenly stopped, near the Sublime Porte, and told we could go no further by other soldiers who had been posted there and been given orders not to let any one pass. Their rifles were levelled at us to enforce the threat. I left my carriage to go and parley with these men, but they would not listen to reason, and we were finally compelled to return the way we had come. On our return to the Chamber, just as I was getting down from my carriage, a terrible fusillade took place which gave rise to a general panic, since nobody knew whence the firing came or against whom it was directed or its motives. All my colleagues took refuge in various corners of the Parliament House, and it was only with great difficulty that we were able to get together again. We then learned that the firing had taken place because the deputy for Syria, Mir Emin Reuslan, who bore some resemblance to the hated Djavid, director of the Young Turk newspaper *Tanin*, desirous of taking advantage of our leaving also to get away, had started in his carriage with an Englishman named Bethlem. The deputy was fired at and killed. During this affair my own coachman took fright and bolted, leaving the carriage to its own devices, and it also disappeared.

We then took possession of the telegraph office of the Chamber, and from there by telegraph and telephone submitted to the Sultan the decisions we had come to and which we had intended to lay before him in person. The small office was filled with deputies and soldiers and the public to such an extent that I was very much afraid it would collapse under us. The soldiers were clamouring to learn that the new Government had been appointed, and suggested as candidates for Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha or myself, and for Minister of War, Edhem Pasha or Nazim Pasha. The most urgent matter, in our opinion, was the appointment of the new War Minister, who could come and take command of the troops and ensure their return to their headquarters in order.

The Palace took a long time to decide upon the new appointments, and refused to nominate a War Minister before the Grand Vizier was appointed, though we impressed upon them the necessity of announcing this appointment to the troops as quickly as possible. Our telegrams to the Palace (which I drew up and which were signed by the Sheik-ul-Islam and myself), as well as the replies, were at once communicated to the waiting crowds and printed for distribution. As our insistent entreaties to know the name of the new Minister for War remained unheeded, and the hour was advancing, in order to be prepared for any emergency, I induced Ismail Hakki Pasha, our military colleague in the Chamber, to take on this responsibility *pro tem.*, and he sent for his uniform so as to have it in readiness.

After a long delay the announcement came from the Palace that the Sultan had decided upon Tewfik Pasha as Grand Vizier. Later on we received a telegram announcing that the request for a general amnesty had been accepted by His Majesty, and an Imperial Hatt to that effect was being brought by the First Secretary of the Palace. This telegram, as well as the one received a few minutes later, which announced the nomination of Marshal Edhem Pasha as Minister for War—copies of which, signed by the Sheik-ul-Islam, myself, and the other deputies and senators present, were handed to the soldiery—seemed to calm the excitement. A little later the First Secretary arrived bearing the Hatt, accompanied by the usual ceremonial. We held a meeting of the Chamber immediately afterwards, some more deputies having joined the original sixty, and I was unanimously elected President of the Chamber, and took the presidential chair. The Hatt was read in the Chamber, and afterwards to the crowd and the army in the square before the Parliament building, and the Sultan's name was loudly cheered. Soon after this a fresh telegram arrived from the Palace announcing the departure of the new Minister for War, escorted by a regiment of cavalry and a battalion of infantry, and asking that the First Secretary—who had been detained pending the settlement of certain questions—should return at once.

On receipt of this news we all decided to take our departure, but when I reached the door of the Parliament building I reflected that to leave all the troops at that late hour without any representative of the Chamber with them might lead to disorder. So Rifaat Bey and I decided to remain and wait for the arrival of Edhem Pasha. The hours passed, however, and the new Minister did not arrive, which caused the soldiers again to become restive and impatient. Our own anxiety was increased by the fact that the telegraph and telephone with the Palace having been cut, we could no longer communicate with them.

While we were waiting, the leaders of the soldiers rushed to tell me they had just learned that cannon and machine-guns were being brought to the Ministry of War, and that they thought it was for the purpose of firing on them. I did all I could to reassure them, and a little later they came back and informed me that they had been able to take possession of these guns, which were now in the St. Sophia Square. It was at this moment that the Minister of Marine, who was wearing the uniform of a general of artillery, accompanied by the Minister of Justice, *en route* to the Palace to join their colleagues and sign their act of resignation, were attacked by the soldiers, who were furious at the moving of the cannon, as the Minister of the Marine was mistaken for the Commander of the Artillery. This Minister drew a revolver, and a sharp exchange of shots took place, as the result of which he was wounded, and his colleague was killed outright. They were brought to the Chamber, where they were placed in rooms under the care of soldiers.

In spite of the assurance that the soldiers were in possession of these guns, they were still extremely anxious for fear they might be attacked by the regiments that had remained at the Ministry of War. The slightest incident might indeed have caused a sanguinary collision which would have had terrible consequences for the whole city. In spite of the opposition of the Sultan's First Secretary, I insisted that Izzet Pasha, chief of the General Staff, who had temporarily taken charge of the Ministry, should send these regiments to join the other troops and fraternise with them. These regiments accordingly arrived, and were received by their comrades with enthusiasm. The "accolade" of the flags and the little ceremony of fraternisation formed quite an interesting and attractive spectacle.

This event, and the withdrawal to a safe place of Mahmoud Moukhtar Pasha, commander of the First Army Corps, against whom the army nourished the greatest resentment, finally removed any further cause we might have had for anxiety.

At last, towards midnight, Edhem Pasha, the new Minister for War, arrived, and was received with every mark of enthusiasm. We welcomed him on the steps of the Parliament building, but unfortunately, Edhem Pasha, who was suffering from asthma, in the emotion caused by the events, was seized with a syncope just as he was getting out of his carriage. This placed us in a very awkward predicament, but a few moments of rest and attention brought him round, and he was able to stand upon a chair and speak to the soldiers in a suffocated voice, his meaning being gathered rather from his gestures than from any sound that came from him.

This pantomime over, Edhem Pasha joined us, and we deliberated together on the best way of getting the soldiers away. These latter then began placing before us their various complaints against certain of their officers, and their requests that they should be removed from their commands. Such and such a colonel, for instance, had trampled on the Koran, and was no longer fit to lead his men; while numerous others had committed similar or different offences. Their complaints, written down on slips of paper, were handed to me, and we promised that the cases should be looked into and justice administered. At last the soldiers asked that a week's holiday should be proclaimed at Constantinople. I pointed out that this would be a little absurd, as there was no victory over the enemy to celebrate, or any other particular occasion for a fête. They accepted this view of the matter, but absolutely insisted upon firing a *coup de joie* as they left, although we pointed out to them that it was now past midnight, and any firing in the city, especially in Galata or the European quarter, would certainly greatly alarm the inhabitants. On the signal for departure being given, there was such a terrible firing that we really thought our last hour had come, and it gave rise to a very ugly incident. As some of the soldiers were on the upper floors of the building and others in the courtyard, these latter, supposing the firing to be an attack on them, became very alarmed, and took up positions with their weapons ready in front of the big entrance door, which was immediately closed, as well as on the staircase and in the windows. It was only with great difficulty that we succeeded in making them understand the position and preventing them from firing.

The withdrawal of these thousands of soldiers took over two hours, and until far into the night the streets of the city resounded with the firing.

It was during this firing that Rifaat Bey, ignorant of its real nature, took to flight, and entered a wardrobe room. Thinking the window in front of him was on a level with the ground outside, he and his son walked through it and fell several feet, both being injured—the father rather seriously. They were taken to a neighbouring house to be cared for, and it was not until the next day that we learned what had happened to them.

When the last of the troops had left, we invited the wounded Minister of Marine to join us, and we accompanied him as far as the house of his relative, Hassan Femi Pasha. Just as we were leaving, my carriage, which had disappeared all day, as mysteriously returned. I parted from Edhem Pasha and the others at the gates of the Sublime Porte, and continued on my way, amid the firing of the soldiers, to my hotel, the Pera Palace, where I arrived after three o'clock in the morning, having, like most of the other actors on this memorable day, neither rested nor tasted food since the previous morning. I found a telegram awaiting me from the new Grand Vizier, Tewfik Pasha, inviting me to go early to the Yildiz Palace.

CHAPTER XIX

1909—1910

My interview with Abd-ul-Hamid—A changed Sultan—Young Turk reprisals—Efforts to avert a catastrophe—Exiled again—Deposition of Abd-ul-Hamid and accession of his brother My return to Constantinople—Incidents in the Chamber—The Bagdad railway question—The Committee of Union and Progress masters of the Empire.

After taking some rest, I went to the Palace about ten o'clock, and found the Grand Vizier, the Sheik-ul-Islam, and other Ministers. The Grand Vizier passed on to me the Sultan's order, in virtue of which I was appointed Minister of Justice, and, in case this did not please me, Minister of the Interior. I declined both offers, pointing out the inconvenience to myself of accepting a portfolio in the circumstances and the advantage of my continuing my activity in the national representation. The Sultan approved my reasons when they were submitted to him, and the Chamberlain, Emin Bey, came to tell me that His Majesty asked that I should go and see him. At that moment Omer Rushdy Pasha, who was also invited to the Palace, arrived, and declined the offer that had been made to him to take over the command of the First Army Corps. I urged upon the Grand Vizier and his colleagues the immediate appointment to this post of Nazim Pasha, who seemed to me to be the only man capable of meeting the needs of the moment. But my recommendation of this officer was rejected by the Sultan, who was always animated by the greatest animosity towards him, and as the Ministers were leaving to go and take up their posts at the Sublime Porte, they told me of their failure, and suggested that I should insist with the Sultan on this matter, as I might have more success.

Ushered into the throne room, I was received by the Sultan in a manner which, after nine years' absence from the capital, was highly flattering to me. I was struck with the apparent excellent moral and physical condition of Abd-ul-Hamid, who, wearing a military uniform and sword, looked ten years younger than when last I saw him. Sitting down at a table, he motioned me to a place opposite to him, and, lighting a cigarette, started a conversation with me in a most affable manner. He made elaborate excuses for all that had passed between us, and said he was now convinced of the sincerity of my sentiments towards him and of the value of the counsels I had given him in the past. He criticised very bitterly the conduct and attitude of those who had provoked the present events, the seriousness of which he recognised, and he begged me to give him the frankest and most sincere advice for dealing with the situation. He added that he was happy at the existence of the new régime, which he intended faithfully to maintain, as he considered it the sole guarantee now for his personal glory and the good of the country. He was, he said, so convinced of the advantage of the new order of things, that he swore upon the Prophet and the Koran that, even should his people now come and throw themselves at his feet and beg him to resume the absolute power, he would not consent, because he believed it was the last effort made to save the Empire, and if it also should unhappily fail, the Empire would be lost.

In reply to the thanks which I expressed to His Majesty, he told me my origin as an Albanian constituted a special title to his high appreciation, as he had always had much sympathy for the Albanians, whom he invariably found sincere and faithful. As he said this, some of the troops, who were still firing their guns out of sheer joy, came before the windows of the Palace and acclaimed the Sultan, upon which he rose to return their salute and gave me leave to go.

Before doing so, however, I assured His Majesty that one of the indispensable factors of renewed order and security was that proper discipline should be restored to the Army, and that to that end a chief should be appointed who was capable of enforcing order. No one seemed to me more suited to this task than Nazim Pasha, who, in spite of the doubts which His Majesty entertained as to his fidelity, was, I was sure, very patriotic and very honest, and I was ready to be guarantee for him. Without any further opposition, the Sultan assured me he would appoint him to the post, and that he would at once have a telegram sent to him at the island of Prinkipio, where he was living.

My conviction gained from this audience was that the Sultan was in no way responsible for the events that had just taken place, and that he was quite sincere in the declarations he had made, not on account of his oaths, but because I realised that he actually found a certain repose and security from his former continual fears in the new régime, which gave satisfaction all round.

From the Palace I went direct to the Chamber, where I found a large number of the deputies assembled in the great hall, and here I gave them an account of my long audience with the Sultan and the conversation we had had. The next day (Thursday) we called all the deputies together in a secret session, at which I gave an exposé of the situation and appealed for union and concord, giving an undertaking that we would take measures to ensure the inviolability of those of our colleagues who had been forced to take flight under the pressure of adverse public opinion. An understanding and unity having thus been established, we held a public meeting, when a resolution was adopted to the effect that every deputy should draw up a telegram for his constituents informing them of the events that had taken place, and giving them assurances that the new régime had not suffered, and that Parliament was continuing its work in perfect order. I immediately drew up the text of my own telegram for Valona, and this was adopted as their model by all my colleagues.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the memory of the British representative, Sir Gerard Lowther, who was good enough, at my request, to instruct all the British consuls to assure the population that the Constitution was not compromised, an assurance which, coming from the representative of Great Britain, gave them special confidence.

Unhappily this calm, and the satisfactory understanding between the deputies of different opinions, did not last long. The news that a detachment of the army of Salonica, under the command of Mahmoud Shefket Pasha, was coming to the capital to restore order and with punitive intentions, brought about a complete change in the sentiments of the Unionist deputies, who at the Saturday's sitting delivered speeches of the utmost virulence. When the arrival of the army at Tchatalja was announced, the leaders of the Committee openly manifested the feelings of vengeance that possessed them, which rendered the general situation, and especially that of the new Cabinet, exceedingly difficult.

The bringing of troops into the capital from Salonica would certainly cause a collision between the two armies, the consequences of which could not but be of the utmost gravity alike for the capital and for the Empire. It was decided that the Chamber should send a deputation to Tchatalja of several deputies belonging to different parties to assure the commander of the uselessness of his journey. But the deputation were not successful in this mission. There remained nothing, therefore—short of opposition by the army of the capital—except the intervention of the representatives of the great Powers. I feared that if this Salonica army was allowed to approach, there would be massacres and looting of a terrible description.

From conversations I had with Herr Helferrich and other German officials, who came to see me at my hotel, I gathered sufficiently well their way of judging the situation. They considered the Sultan was stupid to have allowed things to come to such a pass, and it was plain they found a certain satisfaction in the difficulties that confronted us. M. Zinovieff, the Russian Ambassador, was equally disinclined to move, and said he thought the Sultan and his Ministers should be left to get out of the mess themselves. Early the next morning, which was a Monday, I went to see Sir Gerard Lowther, and had a conversation with him. He did not entirely reject my suggestion that the British Government should intervene, but asked me who would propose such interference. When I replied that I would ask the Sultan to do so, he said such a demand from His Majesty would no longer carry any weight. In that case I said I would see to it that the request came from the Grand Vizier, and the Ambassador's reply was that in that case he would see what could be done. When I saw the Grand Vizier, Tewfik Pasha, on the matter the same evening, he was too upset by the situation to be able to take any resolution. He said he was going to the Sultan to discuss the situation with him, and that if His Majesty did not accept the suggestions he was going to make to him, he should resign. At the same time he warned me to take measures to protect myself, as a telegram had been sent by the commander of the Salonica army to the Prefect of Police demanding the arrest of myself, of Zohrab Effendi, and others whom they were trying to implicate in the military revolt. I knew that on the carriages bringing the troops denunciations had been scrawled in chalk against various persons, and that my name figured prominently among them. I asked the Grand Vizier to show me the telegram, and he said he had left it at his private residence, and that I could see it if I called the following morning. When, however, early the next morning, I reached the Grand Vizier's house, he had already left for the Palace, and I never saw the telegram.

Matters had already become threatening. The Grand Vizier was resigning; Nazim Pasha, who had just been appointed Minister of War, returned to his home at the island of Prinkipio, and the officers of the Salonica army were already in the capital.

There was nothing for it but for me to place myself under the protection of the British Embassy, which I did. Accompanied by the Second Dragoman of the Embassy, I went on board the Khedivial steamer *Tewfikieh*, flying the British flag, and was installed in the captain's cabin, the door being guarded by men of the crew and my own servant. We left the same evening, and arrived a couple of days later at Athens, where I was received with great consideration by the Greek Government, which was good enough to ensure my life against any attempt that might be made, two police agents, in whose charge I was placed, following me about everywhere. I was soon joined at Athens by my colleague Mufid Bey, the deputy for Argyrocastro (Albania), who had left Constantinople for Bucharest two days before my own departure.

During my stay in the Greek capital we received news from Constantinople, both by official channels and through the press, which more and more distressed us. The inevitable sanguinary collision between the army of Salonica and that of Constantinople having taken place, Mahmoud Shefket Pasha took charge of the capital, where a state of siege was proclaimed.

A general meeting of the two Chambers and of various former Ministers and dignitaries, which was held in the suburbs of Constantinople, proclaimed the deposition of Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid and the accession to the throne of his heir, Mehmed Rushad. Courts martial sat at the

Ministry for War in summary judgment on military and civilians.

I met at the Legation the Turkish military attaché who had taken part in the repressions and had returned. In presence of the Minister I expressed my indignation at the acts that had taken place, which exceeded all the bounds of legitimate repression, expecting that this officer would express some regret on his side for these unfortunate events. But he, who seemed to be so polished and civilised a gentleman and officer, at once assumed a violent attitude in face of my criticisms, and said that what he regretted was that he and his officer comrades, who numbered over seven thousand, had not taken the places of the common soldiers, as they would have been ready to do, in order to defend the revolution, and so leave with the population the memory of such a butchery as they would never forget. Astounded at these savage sentiments, I replied that if he and his friends found that " the blood that has been spilt is not sufficient, the mass of the population is within your reach. You have only to strike to satisfy your thirst for slaughter." He replied that they were determined to do this on the first occasion that presented itself!

After his deposition, Abd-ul-Hamid was taken to Salonica and interned in the Villa Allatini there. The various people sentenced were hanged in different places in Constantinople. The unfortunate army which revolted was practically wiped out.

As a consequence of these sad events, and of the judicial inquiry that had been started against myself and several other members of Parliament, there was nothing for me to do but prolong my absence from the capital. After several weeks' stay at Athens and Corfu, I went with my family to Naples and on to Rome. But in spite of the efforts of my enemies to compromise me in the events of April 13th, the inquiry having shown nothing against me, a decision of *non-lieu* in my favour was recorded at a sitting of the

Chamber. A few days after the sittings of the Chamber had recommenced, therefore, I returned to Constantinople to take my part in the Parliamentary work.

As the Unionists were still in fear of some fresh outbreak against them, they transferred the Parliament to the sumptuous Palace of Tchirigan on the Bosphorus outside the city. A few days after my return the Liberal Party, which was reconstituted and strengthened by the adhesion of the large majority of the Albanian and Arab deputies, elected me unanimously as their leader. It was at this time that the question of the concession of the navigation of the Euphrates was raised, with a view to withdrawing it from the actual holder, Mr. Lynch, M.P. This matter, which was submitted to the Chamber by the Government, was supported by the Grand Vizier and the Minister of Finance, but it afforded us the curious spectacle of a measure proposed by the Government and supported by the Opposition, but opposed by the Governmental party, and this was the first indication of disagreement between the Grand Vizier, Hussein Hilmi Pasha (who had been reinstated after the fall of Tewfik Pasha, transferred as Ambassador to London), and the Unionist Party, which he represented. As Chief of the Opposition, I myself drew up an *ordre du jour* supporting the Government's proposal. The Committee met in full session and demanded the resignation of the Grand Vizier and his replacement by Hakki Pasha (then Ambassador at Rome).

As this change, when it took place, occurred simultaneously with the burning of the magnificent Palace of Tchirigan, which was totally destroyed in a few hours, it was considered to be of very bad augury. The Committee of Union and Progress, always obsessed by the same fears, refused to return to the old Parliament building, and rented provisionally the house of the former War Minister, Riza Pasha, beside the Yildiz Palace. Here the new Grand Vizier, Hakki Pasha, presented himself and read his Ministerial declaration. Later, in spite of strong opposition, the old Palace of the Sultan's sister, Djémilé Sultane, on the seashore, was rented and the Parliament installed there.

An amusing incident occurred to me about this time. Taking up one day the French paper *Le Jeune Turc*, which was one of the organs of the Committee, I read an article stating that Sir Ernest Cassel, who was director of the National Bank, and was experiencing some difficulty in his efforts to float a loan, had been told that he had only to come to me and offer me £10,000, and that the matter would immediately go through. Apart from its libellous character, the statement was all the more ridiculous, as Sir Ernest was at the time in Egypt, while, far from needing any such help as mine, he had on the Council of Administration of the bank the Minister of Finance and several of the Chiefs of the Unionist Party. I called upon the editor of the paper to give me an explanation, and, when pressed, he told me who his informant was. Thereupon, going to the Chamber, I asked for permission to speak on a personal matter, and declared my conviction that there could not be any one in that assembly stupid and cowardly enough to have invented such a fable. But as I spoke, a Dr. Ismit (whose name had indeed been given me by the editor as the originator of the information) rose in his place, and said, "It was I who caused the paragraph to be inserted." "Then it is you," I retorted, "who are the coward." As my opponent at once retaliated and started abusing me, stung to fury I seized him and flung him to the floor. We were quickly separated, and Ismit was removed from the Chamber. I was a little ashamed of myself for having in a moment of indignation resorted to fisticuffs at my age, but most of my friends applauded my act, and said Ismit had only got what he deserved.

Since the seizure of supreme power by the Committee of Union and Progress, Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, the

German Ambassador, had been the only one among the Ambassadors who had maintained an attitude of reserve towards them. In spite of all their unconstitutional acts, the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France, and Russia, either through their feeling the influence of some of their personnel who had been won to the Young Turk cause, or else through false judgment of its merits, showed a sympathy which was little worthy of their positions, and which, furthermore, did not show much perspicacity. The French Embassy became the rendezvous of the chiefs of the Party. M. André Mandelstamm, the First Dragoman of the Russian Embassy, was to all intents and purposes their chief adviser. Mr. Fitzmaurice, the First Dragoman of the British Embassy, was the only member of the diplomatic corps who had formed a proper opinion of the mentality and the mischievous policy of this group of mysterious people, the Unionists; but, unfortunately, his predecessor, Sir Adam Block, who was the English representative of the titles of the Ottoman Debt, was devoted to them body and soul, and used his influence with Sir Gerard Lowther on their behalf. We greatly deplored this sympathetic policy, which helped to encourage the Unionists in their work of mischief in the country.

At the height of our anxiety, Ismail Hakki Bey, deputy for Bagdad, and one of the most influential chiefs of the Committee, brought forward an interpellation on the subject of the Bagdad railway. This interpellation looked to me like a manœuvre intended to increase English sympathy. But the presence at the Chamber at the sitting in question of all the representatives of the Anatolian Railway Company, and Hakki Bey's treatment of the interpellation, as well as the explanations given by the Minister of Public Works, showed us to our no small astonishment the true motive for this interpellation. This was nothing less than to obtain the sanction of the arrangements made in Abd-ul-Hamid's time and the affirmation of the Committee's desire for the carrying out of this enterprise, which was of such great advantage to Germany and so detrimental to the Empire's own interests.

The Committee now devoted all their efforts to consolidating their power, their directing policy being to set aside any opposing elements either from persons or from nations that might seek to resist or check their influence, as also to bring under their entire control the financial and economical administration of the country. The ethnical element which to them seemed the strongest and most dangerous was the Albanian people. As I shall explain in detail in the part specially concerned with the Albanian question, nothing was neglected that could foment trouble, and all kinds of repressive measures were resorted to with the sole aim of crushing what was believed to be the head of the Nationalist Medusa.

As regarded the economical domain, the Ministry of Finance was in the hands of one of the most capable chiefs of the Committee, Djavid Bey. The Ministry of Public Works was for a time confided to Hallajian Effendi, an Armenian who was mad and vain to such a degree that he was ready to sacrifice anything to preserve the unmerited honour of being a Minister. When, however, the work of this Ministry acquired more importance, the Grand Vizier, Hakki Pasha, himself took over the management of it. It was during his management that the law on the concession of the convention for the construction of the railway line from Soma to Banderma and another to Bagdad was submitted to the Chamber. It was a repetition of the policy of Abd-ul-Hamid as regarded the concessions, though the proposals were even more thorough and audacious. The law on the concessions gave *carte blanche* to the Ministers to accord concessions without the control of Parliament. Different groups brought together by the most influential chiefs of the Unionist Party were interested, some in the concessions to be accorded to the

French, some to those reserved for the Americans and others, but the chief question was always the Bagdad railway.

As I was hostile to the principles of the kilometric guarantees, I could only oppose the convention by which the Government undertook once for all to pay so heavy a guarantee for the line to be constructed across the plains to Bagdad, when it had every right to refuse this guarantee and get it constructed at much less expense. My campaign against the scheme was logical, economical, and patriotic, but all the members of the Cabinet, beginning with the Grand Vizier, and all the representatives of the Committee in Parliament united furiously against my opposition. My Liberal colleague Zohrab Effendi, the Armenian, who had been won over by the Unionists to champion their favourite project, defended the convention and the system of guarantees in the course of a long speech.

In refuting his arguments I had to make allusion to a slanderous statement made about me in the Young Turk newspaper *Tanin*, which stated that I had received a commission to support a demand for a concession where no kilometric guarantee was accorded! "If," I said, "a commission is given for a concession without such guarantees, what commission can be given for concessions where guarantees are assured?" This remark, which was intended rather to refute the calumny launched against me, brought down a tempest on my head. The whole of the Ministers, including the Grand Vizier, rushed at me as I stood in the Chamber, and, seizing me by the hand or clothes, angrily demanded what I meant. I repeated that, as the editor of the *Tanin*, who was present, had made such charges against me, I had the right to defend myself by putting the question which had so upset them; but, before I realised what was happening, I received a blow on the head from behind, delivered by one of the deputies, Dervich Bey, a creature of the Committee. A great commotion ensued, and the sitting was interrupted, amid the indignant protests of my friends and many other of the deputies.

The same evening my assailant visited me to offer his excuses, but I refused to overlook the matter so easily, and I did not return to the Chamber. Later a deputation, consisting of different Parliamentary leaders, with Talaat Bey at their head, came to the hotel to offer me formal excuses and escorted me solemnly back to the Chamber, where, having received the apologies of the assembly, I returned to my place. For me, personally, the incident terminated to my entire satisfaction, both on account of this procedure as by reason of the sympathy shown me on all sides, particularly from all over Albania, but the cause was lost, as the concessions were accorded, and at the same time the direction of the new policy of the Ottoman Empire was formally sealed.

PART II

ALBANIA AND THE ALBANIANS

British support of Albanian claims—Albania, the country and the people—Manners and customs—Historical principles—Albania under the Turks—Tearing Albania to pieces—The Young Turks' régime—The proclamation of Albanian independence—The Provisional Government—Candidatures to the throne—Blockade and bombardment—The Conference of London—"Sacrificed in the interests of Europe"—The Prince of Wied—His arrival in Albania—A painful and futile "reign"—Committee of Public Safety—Departure of William of Wied—Albania's claim for justice.

[The following lines, which are the reproduction of an article by Ismail Kemal Bey in the *Quarterly Review* for July 1917, were to have formed the nucleus of a longer chapter or two, containing more personal details, with which he had intended to supply me, so as to complete this book properly. Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to jot down these notes, and so no alternative remains to me except to reproduce the *Quarterly* article as it is, which I do with the courteous permission of the Editor. —*S. S.*]

Nearly forty years ago, on July 26th, 1880, Mr. G. J. (afterwards Lord) Goschen, then Ambassador at Constantinople, made himself the eloquent exponent of the cause of Albania in a telegram[1] sent to Lord Granville. This telegram contained the following remarks:

"As ancient and distinct a race as any by whom they are surrounded, they [the Albanians] have seen the nationality of these neighbouring races taken under the protection of various European Powers and gratified in their aspirations for a more independent existence. They have seen the Bulgarians completely emancipated in Bulgaria and made masters in Eastern Roumelia. They have seen the ardent desire of Europe to liberate territory inhabited by Greeks from Turkish rule. They have seen the Slavs in Montenegro protected by the great Slav Empire of the north with enthusiastic pertinacity. They have seen the Eastern Question being solved on the principle of nationality, and the Balkan Peninsula being gradually divided, as it were, among various races on that principle. Meanwhile they see that they themselves do not receive similar treatment. Their nationality is ignored; and territory inhabited by Albanians is handed over in the north to the Montenegrins to satisfy Montenegro, the protégé of Russia, and in the south to Greece, the protégé of England and France. . . .

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[1] Accounts and Papers, 1880. Turkey No. 15. Vol. lxxxi.

"If a strong Albania should be formed, the excuse for occupation by a foreign Power in the case of the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire would be greatly weakened. A united Albania would bar the remaining entrances to the north, and the Balkan Peninsula would remain in the hands and under the sway of the races who now inhabit it. Otherwise the Albanians might be an insuperable difficulty at a time when troubles should arise. A population in great part Mussulman would be a source of the greatest difficulty to the Slav or Greek countries round it. . . . I consider that, in proportion as the Albanian nationality could be established, the probability of European intervention in the Balkan Peninsula would be diminished."

This remarkable exposé shows the justness of view and the perspicacity of an English statesman who so long ago not only realised and defined the status of Albania and her just position, but foresaw events, and the political injustice which was to cause them—events which would serve as the tinder for setting the entire world in a blaze. What is the country, and who are the people, of whom these things were said ?

Between the Adriatic, the Pindus, the range of the Balkans and the Dinaric Alps, on the dividing line between East and West, where history has witnessed the meeting of so many wandering peoples and so many nascent civilisations, Albania stands like a formidable rampart.[1] Protected from foreign invasion on three sides by its circle of mountain peaks, and on the fourth by the sea, Albania was formerly inhabited by a race whose origin dates from Pelasgic times. Though not strangers to the civilisation of the Greeks, this race nevertheless preserved its own character and the pride of its pre-Hellenic origin. In the second century B.C. the country became the refuge of all the Macedonian and Epirote tribes who, refusing to bow before the Roman domination, fled before the legions of Æmilius Paulus. In its outward aspect, the country of Albania is somewhat forbidding. But, once in the interior, one finds sites and contrasts of great beauty and charm. Between two mountainous chains of barren heights, which from afar seem unattractive enough, there lie pleasant valleys and extensive plains of great richness and fertility. Behind that curtain of rocky peaks and steep acclivities there stretch wide expanses of field and forest covered with green or gold, according to the season. At the very threshold of gloomy gorges or narrow defiles in the mountains, one comes suddenly upon delicious oases covered with rich vegetation. Thundering torrents pouring down the mountain side are replaced a little further on by limpid brooks noiselessly meandering through aromatic valleys, while great clumps of evergreen trees and bushes are scattered on the emerald hill-side. Along the seacoast, bays of limpid blue and serene, bottomless gulfs lie at the foot of mountains whose peaks are bathed eternally in the drifting clouds.

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[1] Its extent and boundaries were defined by Lord E. Fitzmaurice, who in 1880 wrote to the Foreign Office as follows :

"May 26th, 1880.) The district covered by this geographical expression [Albania] falls mainly within the two vilayets of Scutari and Janina, but extends also in an easterly direction beyond the watershed of the mountains dividing the streams which fall into the Adriatic from those which fall into the Ægean Sea, and includes portions of the vilayets of Bitolia or Monastir, and of the vilayet of Pristina or Kossovo. The extension of the Albanian population in a north-easterly direction towards Pristina and Vranja is especially marked, and is fully acknowledged, even upon maps such as that of Kiepert, generally regarded as unduly favourable to the Slav element, and that published by Messrs. Stanford in the interest of the claims of the Greek Christian population. . . . The vilayet of Kossovo, with the exception of the Serb district extending eastward from Mitrovitza, may be said to be Albanian.

"July 22nd, 1880.) Every map that I have seen of those districts (the greater part not only of the Kossovopolye, but also of the Metochia, and indeed the whole country up to the line of the Rivers Bistritza and Drin, and of the district of Ljuma, including Ipek and Prisrent) marks them as Albanian and not as Slavonic, always excepting the Kossovopolye. It is no doubt true that these districts at the end of the 17th century were still mainly inhabited by Serbs, and once did form part of the old Serbian kingdom, though M. Hahn is inclined to think that the aboriginal inhabitants were Albanians whom the Serbs dispossessed at a still earlier period of history."—Accounts and Papers, 1880. No. 15. Vol. lxxxi.

Such is the country where for centuries have lived the "Shkupetars" (the "Men of the Eagle"). Dwelling in a sort of isolation, they were variously grouped under the generic name of Macedonians or Illyrians, according to the caprice of different conquerors. But they themselves, profoundly indifferent to these arbitrary arrangements, which did not interfere with their race, their language or their national character, seemed hardly to be aware of the fall of Empires or the changes of frontiers. Proudly they preserved the independence of which no power could deprive them. On the fall of the Roman Empire, they reappeared on the world's stage to prove that they were of a race whose solidity time could not affect, and whose national genius custom could not pervert. Since those days, whenever an attack has been made upon their liberties, they have been found as intrepid as in the far-off times when they followed Alexander the Great or Pyrrhus; and to-day they display the singular and interesting spectacle of a nationality preserved pure and undefiled through the centuries, in spite of so many successive conquests by Romans, Byzantines, Normans, Bulgarians, Serbs, Italians, and Turks.

In spite of the religious and other consequences of the Turkish domination, the Albanians have remained faithful to the customs and habits of their ancestors. The three principal objects of an Albanian's devotion are his honour, his family, and his country. The notion of honour is inculcated in him from the earliest age. He prefers death to an insult that has not been wiped out. No consideration of interest stands higher in his estimation than the "bessa" (or word of honour). In the presence of the corpse of father or brother, he will respect the very murderer to whom he has given his "bessa" on receiving him in his house. The stranger will enjoy the united protection of all the inhabitants of a village or the members of a tribe, if one of them, even the most humble, has given his word of honour. Closely connected with this sense of honour is that of personal dignity. It has been erroneously stated that Albania is a feudal country. But feudalism is incompatible with that sense of personal honour and independence which is characteristic of the Albanian, and which is carried to such lengths that the humblest consider themselves the equals, man for man, of the highest. Obedience to the chief is simply a form of showing respect, a duty inculcated in every one from the earliest age.

Family ties are very strong among the Albanians. The head of the family is lord of the household, but not its despot. He it is who directs all the affairs of the community and executes the decisions taken in council. The sons and grandsons, even after marriage, continue to live together in a group. There are families whose members, living together under the same roof or in the same enclosure, number sixty or eighty people. Each region of the country consists of a considerable stretch of territory in which the different villages are considered to be composed of members of the same family. But the word " family " in Albania has a much wider meaning than elsewhere. By the word " fisse " is understood a group of families descending from a common stem, while by the word " far " is meant the closer relationship existing among the members of one or several of these families; and these family ties are so much respected that the inhabitants of the same village, whether Mussulman or Christian, never intermarry. The depositary of local authority is by right the oldest member of the principal family; and his councillors are the older men of the other families. Among certain tribes, like those in the mountains of Upper Albania, the real chiefs are the " Voivodes " and the " Bairaktars " (or standard-bearers); and the council consists of the elders, whose number varies according to that of the families. After them come the " Dovrans " (or guarantors), and the " Djoibars " (a kind of bailiff). The chiefs and their councillors or, in the mountainous parts, the " Voivodes " and the " Bairaktars," watch over local interests and apply the law. The " Dovrans " meet and consult with the council whenever a crime has been committed or local interests are in jeopardy. It is they also who issue the call to arms in case of need. It is the task of the " Djoibars," chosen from among the bravest and most influential of the families, to carry out the decisions of the Council.

Nowhere does woman enjoy more consideration or influence than in my country. As wife, her individuality is completely subordinated to the authority of her husband, but this is not the case as regards her acts in common or public life, for she is always consulted on questions relating to family or country. She is less proud of her beauty, her birth, or her wealth than of the number of her sons and their merit, which she considers redounds to herself. The mother of a number of children is an object of veneration. In spite of these privileges, the Albanian woman is never seen in public with her husband. She carries her Stoic qualities so far that she is never present at the departure of her husband on warlike expeditions. But should the country be in danger, either through invasion or by an arbitrary act of the Government, it is the women who first raise the alarm and urge their menfolk to defence or revolt.

The Albanians, who value highly both the ties of relationship and the pleasures of friendship, find many occasions of strengthening these bonds and of observing the traditions attaching to them. For instance, the new-born child is presented to the chief of the family and to all the members, the oldest of whom chooses its name. When the child is seven days old, all the relatives and friends are invited to a dinner, where a special sweet dish made for the occasion is served. Another intimate ceremony, which is carried out with a certain amount of pomp, is the cutting of a lock of the child's hair in the course of its first year. The father chooses a friend to do this—a Christian if the father be a Mussulman, and vice versa. The lock of hair is placed in a purse with a golden or silver present, and is kept as a souvenir. This act is supposed to create a spiritual relationship between the family of the child and the friend, and by it they contract obligations towards each other of mutual aid or vengeance in case of outrage. This kind of alliance is held in especial honour among the mountaineers, where Mussulmans and Christians both call it the Saint-Nicolo.

Every young Albanian has a foster-brother (called "vlam"), either of the same religion as himself or a different one, who is considered as an actual member of the family, and takes part in its joys and griefs and its vendettas. There is no instance of such a tie having been broken through animosity or treason; and in many parts these engagements are considered so sacred that the children of the two families do not intermarry. The ceremony of contracting this relationship of the "vlam" differs in different parts of the country; but usually the two foster-brothers, after taking vows of fidelity before relatives and witnesses, cut each other slightly in the finger and then suck each other's blood.

My object in this brief sketch of Albanian customs has been to show that two virtues preside over the public life of my compatriots, not only in their domestic arrangements, but also in their history and their demeanour towards peoples and sovereigns with whom they have had relations of friendship or hostility. These two virtues—fidelity to their word of honour and the religion of patriotism, with which goes the love of independence—have never ceased to guide them through all the reverses their country has suffered. Though Albania, in the course of her long history, has often had to give up her own government, she has never abandoned her independence. During centuries of effacement under foreign rule, she submitted in order that her very existence should not be compromised ; submission was necessary for her preservation. But she never was the first to violate her oath of fidelity to her suzerain. She waited for the other party to the contract to break faith ; then, released from her engagement, and having never lost sight of her aspirations, she profited by the opportunity to recover what she had lost.

We must go back some time in the history of Albania to show how this double principle has always guided her attitude and her acts. When Turkey, under Murad II, had conquered the other Balkan States, she was stopped by the unexpected and stubborn resistance of Albania. At that time the beloved and respected chief of my country was John Castriote. Faced with the alternative of continuing a doubtful struggle against the Sultan's overwhelming forces, or of accepting a friendly arrangement with him, he adopted the latter plan, which guaranteed the autonomy of his country. He even sent his four sons to Adrianople, then the capital of the Empire, as a sort of hostages; and for ten years he remained scrupulously faithful to his pact. George, the youngest of these sons, whose warlike deeds later became the subject of national legend when he fought under the name of Scanderbeg, was thus from his infancy at the court of Murad II, who gave him an excellent education and showed great consideration for him. George Castriote returned the Sultan's kindness with a sincere attachment. But when John Castriote died, and the succession should have gone to his son George, the Sultan, instead of sending the young man to Albania, sent his own troops, who seized Croia, the capital. The independence of Albania was at an end; but so, too, was the fidelity of George Castriote. Profiting by the defeat which the Hungarians had inflicted on the Turkish troops at Morava, he left for Albania with 300 men. He was received with enthusiasm, not merely by his own people at Croia, but by all the other chiefs, and was acknowledged supreme chief of Albania.

For thirty years Scanderbeg filled Europe with the tumult of his arms and the glory of his name, in a long struggle against the Turkish power, hitherto regarded as invincible. On the eve of his death he entrusted his son, still a minor, to the Venetian Republic, convinced that he could not do better for the heir to his throne or for the security of his country. But his trust was grievously misplaced. Instead of protecting his son, Venice delivered his country to Turkey; and once more the Ottoman Empire obtained by treaty what she could not obtain by force of arms. Once more Albania was forced to recognise the suzerainty of the Sultan and to take the oath of fidelity to him. Since that time, although the Albanians have never given up their passionate desire for independence, they have been the only Balkan people really attached to the Ottoman Empire, always ready to support it, always happy to help strengthen it and to profit by its strength. But whenever the Albanians have become aware that, instead of growing stronger, Turkey had weakened herself, and hurried to her ruin, they have risen in an effort of self-preservation with the unanimous cry, "Let her commit suicide if she wishes ; we intend to survive."

The attachment of the Albanians to the Empire must not be attributed to the influence of the Mussulman religion, which the great majority of the population accepted when Albania was incorporated with Turkey. The reason must be sought in a higher order of national interest. Although in a general way the influence of religion on the minds of the people cannot be denied, nor the power that Islam has had in the assimilation of races, Albania is an exception to the rule, so general in the East, that religion constitutes nationality. In Upper Albania, from the shores of the Adriatic to the Serbian frontier, the large majority of the population is Mussulman, while a portion is Catholic ; in Lower Albania, they are Mussulman and Orthodox. Yet, faithful as are all to their respective religions, and often ardent and austere, they make no distinctions among themselves on account of their faith, nor do any of the population arrogate to themselves on these points superiority or privilege.

The Sultans, happy at having at last come to the end of so stubborn a resistance, and relying more on the courage of the Albanians than on the wealth of their country, were satisfied to annex Albania, entering into undertakings to respect her laws and customs, and to leave the command and the administration to the Albanian chiefs themselves. The most capable among these Albanian chiefs, attracted to the capital, and loaded with favours and honours, began to occupy the highest civil and military posts. Nor were the Albanians slow to appreciate the advantages which the Empire assured them in guaranteeing them against all possible aggression on the part of others. And, since the Sultan's Government, on its side, valued the services rendered by this virile people in the consolidation of Ottoman authority in the Balkans, a mutual and sincere confidence was established, which, except for certain temporary misunderstandings, increased during the whole time in which the politics of the Porte were inspired by the enlightened principles of the last true statesmen of the Empire.

In the last fifty years, this state of things has undergone a great change. In the first place, the death of Aali Pasha, and the noxious and incoherent policy of his successor, Mahmoud Nedim Pasha, and thereafter the political and territorial changes brought about in the Balkan Peninsula as a sequel to the Russo-Turkish war of 1877, were the first signals of troublous times for the Albanians. These last-named events showed them that they could not face the future for their country with the same sense of security as they had felt in the past. The Treaty of Berlin, which gave international sanction to the rights of the Balkan nationalities, added to the defence of these rights made by the British delegate, Lord E. Fitzmaurice, before the International Commission at Constantinople for the elaboration of the organic law of the vilayets of Turkey in Europe, were events that calmed the minds of the Albanians without absolutely reassuring them. The spectre of future dismemberment continued to torment them.

The fall of the Beaconsfield Cabinet and the naval demonstration undertaken on the personal initiative of Mr. Gladstone, with the object of assuring the immediate handing over to Montenegro of country torn from Albania, shook their confidence in Great Britain. My countrymen, who had always reposed their faith in the desire for impartiality and equity entertained by the Liberal Governments, especially that of Great Britain, were more concerned at the fear of being abandoned by this latter Power than by the amputation their country had sustained for the first time since its incorporation in the Ottoman Empire. Happily this apprehension did not last long. Mr. Goschen, who had been sent to Constantinople as Ambassador Extraordinary, undertook, as I have said above, to defend the rights and interests of the Albanian people. The verbal assurances he gave to our compatriot, Abeddin Pasha, Minister for Foreign Affairs at that time, and his official reports to Downing Street, were of a nature calculated to reassure the most sceptical of Albanians as to the British Government's real political views and their desire to see justice done to our people.

Unfortunately the Porte, whose interest it was to bring about the unity of the Albanian territories and to fortify the ethnical element, was the first to adopt the opinion of those who had an interest in seeing the country disunited and enfeebled. Thenceforward the Albanians began to see clearly and to take into account the new situation created in the Balkans, and the danger menacing their national existence. From this period, too, irrespective of their region or religion, they manifested more clearly their conviction of racial individuality, as distinct from that of the other peoples of the Balkans, and affirmed more and more their decision not to be subjugated by any foreign Government, Greek or Slav.

Abd-ul-Hamid, whose chief preoccupation was always his own personal safety, had appreciated the faithful character of the Albanians from his youth up, and did his utmost, in his usual way, to obtain personal benefit from the fact. The person of the Sultan, his palace, and even his harem, were entrusted to Albanians. In the Ministries and in the civil and military services, Albanians occupied the highest and most distinguished positions. Despite these favours, my countrymen never renounced their national sentiments or their legitimate aspirations, although they religiously observed the oath of fidelity to the Ottoman dynasty which their ancestors had taken. During this reign of thirty odd years they never let slip an opportunity of showing their desire to be what they had been before their submission to the Turk. The smallest political event in the East found an echo in Albania, when the people of the country would meet either in a populous centre or in some distant and inaccessible mountain pass to discuss matters, and thereafter present their claims to the Sovereign himself. It must be confessed that Abd-ul-Hamid followed every Albanian movement very closely, and, whether from personal or political reasons, never failed to pay the most serious attention to the demands and susceptibilities of these subjects.

The last phase of Macedonian affairs, and the decision taken by Europe regarding the organisation of this country, seemed to the Albanians likely to compromise their national unity. They began in consequence to feel acute anxiety, wondering what fate was in store for their country. It was at this critical juncture that the Young Turks asked for their aid in the execution of their political programme —which at the first blush seemed to conform with Albanian national aspirations—of uniting all the various ethnical elements under the same flag of justice and equality, and thus checkmating foreign envy.

Ten thousand armed Albanians met at Ferizovic on July 15th, 1908, and sent to the Sultan a famous telegram, which produced a greater impression upon him than the remonstrances of all the Turks or all the diplomatic representations of Europe.

The telegram sent to Muhijeddin Bey, Turkish Chargé d'Affaires in Paris, on July 22nd, asking him to "confer with Ismail Kemal Bey," and get an immediate reply, was referred to in a previous chapter.

My reply advised His Majesty without a moment's delay to promulgate the Constitution, which was the only efficacious remedy and the only sure way of grouping round his throne all the peoples of the Empire. And, as I understood the morality and mentality of the Young Turks, as well as their motive for the political course they were pursuing, I also recommended His Majesty to take all necessary measures to prevent aggression on the part of the adventurers in power, and to attract to himself without their intervention the confidence and help of the Albanian population. Two days later the Constitution was promulgated; and in obedience to a fresh order of the Sultan, a report setting forth my plan, which I had laid before the Chargé d'Affaires, was forwarded to the Sovereign by the same channel.

The Albanians soon discovered the real intentions of the Committee of Union and Public Safety, and perceived the gulf that lay between their own political conceptions and the Unionist programme. By union the Albanians understood a grouping of different races under the flag of the Ottoman Constitution, which would strengthen the Empire by the union of all its peoples, guaranteeing to each its national existence. The Committee, on the other hand, only thought of uniting all the different races by forcing them to deny their origin; and, in proportion as their position in the Government was confirmed, so their ambition to carry out this programme increased. The first consequence of their course of action was the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary and the proclamation of Bulgarian independence.

During my stay at Valona, my native town, I learned from a reliable source what the directing idea of the Committee was, and how the central committee of Salonica had contrived to bring about this political change. Their object was to ensure the triple advantage of (1) obtaining popularity for themselves throughout the country; (2) discrediting the former statesmen, of whom they wanted to get rid at all costs; (3) using this political liquidation as a means of ridding the country of foreign influence, so as to be able to apply their policy of racial unification with the utmost vigour. On my return to Constantinople I hastened to put Kiamil Pasha *au courant* of what was going on, and urged him no longer to tolerate the working of the revolutionary committees, the existence of which constituted an anomaly and a grave danger for the establishment of a regular government. Unfortunately the old Grand Vizier committed the blunder of trying to use this as a bogey to frighten the Sultan.

The Committee, growing bolder, and without waiting for the termination of the negotiations with Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria, seized power by a *coup de main*. The first act of the first Unionist Cabinet was the promulgation of the famous draconian law on the Bands, the sole object of which was to legitimise a criminal attempt on Albania. The Young Turks, who saw in the Albanians merely a Mussulman people having no political ideal beyond a desire to avoid the payment of taxes, were convinced that by management and the exertion of pressure they would become docile and common Ottomans, and would serve as an example for the other nationalities. Nursing this hope, they made, in a space of less than two years, four expeditions against Albania. But the Albanians, who had in the course of centuries past resisted the power of so many Empires, and who had not been lulled to sleep even in the time of Abd-ul-Hamid, were not terrified by these efforts. On the contrary, the aggressive policy of the Young Turks was the leaven that caused their national sentiments to revive and flourish afresh. The successes which the armies of Djavid and Chevket obtained here and there over the Albanians only stirred to flame the embers of revolt.

The Albanians, however, whose enthusiasm never carries them beyond their natural character, gave, even at this critical moment, proofs of political moderation and foresight. While their blood was flowing copiously for the defence of their national rights, I in my capacity as leader, with my Albanian colleagues, made every possible effort, both in the public sittings of Parliament and at private meetings with Ministers, to bring the Turkish Government and Chamber back to reason and to a sense of patriotic duty by showing the true sentiments which animated the Albanians in general towards the Sultan and his Empire, and pointing out the danger of a senseless struggle. But all our sincere warnings remained unheeded.

In the summer of 1911 I went to Cettinje to join the chiefs of the Malissori, who had taken refuge with their families in Montenegro before the threats of Chekvet Tourgout Pasha. I ought here to express our gratitude to King Nicolas, who aided me in my task by his friendly welcome, and helped the families who had taken refuge in Montenegro with kindliness and humanity. After a brave resistance, all the delegates of the Malissori signed, at a meeting at Gertché, a memorial drawn up at my instigation, which contained the twelve points of the national claims, renewing once more at the same time their assurances of attachment to the Ottoman Empire. Unfortunately, this period of appeasement was but short-lived. The new Chamber, whose election had been imposed with a view to strengthening the position of the purely Young Turk Government, recommenced the game of taking back with one hand what they had given the previous day with the other.

Troubled by this fresh attitude of the Porte, and being convinced that the war with Italy would lead to a general war in the Balkans, enveloping Albania from all sides, I addressed a circular from Nice, whither I had retired, to all the Albanian centres, reminding them of the imperative necessity of being ready to face any eventuality. These gloomy previsions, and the general discontent caused by the Tripolitan war, forced Albania to a general rising. The savage obstinacy of the Young Turks in their attempt to absorb the nationalities had made our resistance inevitable and compelled us to fight for our national life. Challenged and attacked as we were in our existence as a people, though we felt how much this struggle would be contrary to our unabated desire to stand by the Empire, had we not above all things a right to work out our own salvation? The general rising and the triumphal entry of the chiefs of all the tribes into Uskub put an end to the extravagant and criminal power of the Young Turks and brought about the dissolution of the Chamber. Our patriotic aims were attained, and from this time onward we returned to our allegiance to the Empire.

Leaving Valona again for Constantinople, I was visited, on my arrival at Trieste, by Colonel Beckir, who told me that Prince Mirko of Montenegro wanted to have a conversation with me at Porto-Roso, near Trieste. When I saw him, the Prince showed me a telegram from the King, his father, inviting me to meet him at Antivari, and discuss the part that Albania could play in the war against Turkey and the advantages she was likely to derive from such participation. This interview, however, did not take place. I considered it to be premature, and thought it better, in every respect, as I explained in my telegraphic reply to King Nicolas, that I should first approach the new Cabinet, the principal Ministers in which were personal friends of mine, in order to try to arrive at an understanding. But, when I made these advances, I found I was simply butting against a blind obstinacy that refused to recognise the gravity of the situation, or to consider the menaces that I left them to guess at, without betraying the confidences which I had received at Porto-Roso. The Porte considered that palliative measures would meet the case, and refused to take the energetic steps required. And as, in view of this attitude, the Balkan Allies had declared war on Turkey, and the Bulgarian armies were in occupation of Kirk-Kilissé, while the Serbs had seized Uskub, I realised that the time had arrived for us Albanians to take vigorous measures for our own salvation.

The Grand Vizier, Kiamil Pasha, pressed me to stand by him, and offered me a portfolio in his Ministry. In other circumstances I should have accepted this post of honour with pleasure, but now a higher duty forced me to decline it. My place was no longer there, and I owed my services entirely to my own country. Kiamil Pasha finally bowed to reasonings the urgency of which he could not but recognise, and we separated with mutual regrets. On my return journey I arrived at Bucharest, where there was a large Albanian colony. As the result of a meeting we held there, fifteen of my compatriots decided to go back with me to Albania. I telegraphed to all parts of Albania to announce my arrival, and declared that the moment had come for us to realise our national aspirations. At the same time I asked that delegates should be sent from all parts of the country to Valona, where a national congress was to be held.

At Vienna I received a telegram from a personal friend at Budapest, who invited me to go thither in order to have an interview with a highly-placed personage. My first visit at Budapest was to Count Andrassy, where I met Count Hadik, his old friend and former Under-Secretary of State, who told me that the person I was to see was none other than Count Berchtold. I met the latter the same evening at Count Hadik's house. His Excellency approved my views on the national question, and readily granted the sole request which I made him, namely, to place at my disposal a vessel which would enable me to reach the first Albanian port before the arrival of the Serbian Army.

As Valona was blockaded by the Greek fleet, I was glad to disembark at Durazzo. There we found awaiting us two Greek warships, which had been there since the previous evening. Our captain was very anxious about us, not without cause; and we shared his concern. But the officer who came on board, after making a scrupulous examination, in the course of which he found nothing but a few arms in the possession of my companions, left me free to land, and our vessel continued her journey.

We found the people of Durazzo in total ignorance of all the events that had been taking place. Deceived by the sparse news which reached them through prejudiced channels, they believed that the Turkish Army was victorious, that it was in occupation of Philippopolis, and was marching on Sofia and Belgrade. They did not even know that the Serbs were at their very gates. Our arrival occasioned some excitement in the town, which was fomented by the Turkish element, joined by a portion of the local population, consisting mostly of Bosnian immigrants, who spread the report that we were *agents provocateurs.* This special and local feeling had not prevented Durazzo and the dependent districts from appointing their delegates to the national congress, and these left for Valona with me and my little band of Albanians from Bucharest.

We travelled on horseback, and, before arriving at our first stopping-place, I learned through a notable of the neighbourhood, who came to meet me, that orders had been telegraphed by the Turkish Commander-in-Chief at Janina to the local gendarmerie to arrest me and take me to his headquarters. We accordingly changed our route, and passed the night in another village. The next morning the chief of gendarmes who was to have carried out this arrest brought me a telegram from the same Commandant at Janina, which asked the local authorities to receive us with honour and do what they could to help us on our journey. This, however, far from calming our fears, rather confirmed the alarming news I had heard the previous evening ; and so, avoiding the route on which we were being watched, I took a safer one, and we finally arrived at Valona. Here our reception was quite different from what it had been at Durazzo. A holy fire of patriotism had taken possession of my native town, and public enthusiasm and delight greeted us everywhere. In a short space of time I found myself surrounded by eighty-three delegates, Mussulmans and Christians, who had come from all parts of Albania, whether or not they were occupied by the belligerent armies.

The Congress was at once opened. At its first sitting —November 15th–28th, 1912—it voted unanimously the proclamation of independence. The sitting was then suspended, and the members left the hall to hoist upon my house—the house where I was born and where my ancestors had lived—amid the acclamations of thousands of people, the glorious flag of Scanderbeg, who had slept wrapped in its folds for the last 445 years. It was an unforgettable moment for me, and my hands shook with hope and pride as I fixed to the balcony of the old dwelling the standard of the last national Sovereign of Albania. It seemed as if the spirit of the immortal hero passed at that moment like a sacred fire over the heads of the people.

On the resumption of the sitting, I was elected President of the Provisional Government, with a mandate to form a Cabinet. But I considered it proper that the Ministers should also be elected by the Congress, and so I waived this prerogative, only reserving to myself the distribution of the portfolios. The Government having been constituted, the Congress elected eighteen members who were to form the Senate. I notified the constitution of the new State to the Powers and the Sublime Porte in the following telegram :

" The National Assembly, consisting of delegates from all parts of Albania, without distinction of religion, who have to-day met in the town of Valona, have proclaimed the political independence of Albania and constituted a Provisional Government entrusted with the task of defending the rights of the Albanian people, menaced with extermination by the Serbian Armies, and of freeing the national soil invaded by foreign forces. In bringing these facts to the knowledge of Your Excellency, I have the honour to ask the Government of His Britannic Majesty to recognise this change in the political life of the Albanian nation.

" The Albanians, who have entered into the family of the peoples of Eastern Europe, of whom they flatter themselves that they are the eldest, are pursuing one only aim, to live in peace with all the Balkan States and become an element of equilibrium. They are convinced that the Government of His Majesty, as well as the whole civilised world, will accord them a benevolent welcome by protecting them against all attacks on their national existence and against any dismemberment of their territory."

I had but one dominant thought, now that I was given presidential power, and that was to organise the small extent of country that remained to us, and to show the Great Powers that Albania was capable of governing herself and deserved the confidence of Europe. As to the future Sovereign, the interest for the moment did not lie so much in the choice of his personality as in the principle which was to decide the choice between a European and a Mussulman prince. My own views frankly favoured a Christian and European, and in this I was supported by all the Albanians as well as by the political considerations that had to be taken into account. Only a European Sovereign could properly guide us in the great European family we were entering. The question of religion did not enter into consideration in this preference for a European, since all the three cults practised in the country—Mussulman, Catholic, and Orthodox—had equal and complete liberty, no rivalry or pre-eminence being possible.

The Sublime Porte, immediately on receiving our notification of independence, set itself in opposition to our aspirations. The Grand Vizier, in a telegram replying to my note, tried to impose on us, as Sovereign, a member of the Imperial family. According to him, Albania could only be saved by being the vassal of the Ottoman Empire, with a Prince of the Imperial family. On what Power, he asked, did she expect to rely ? On Austria ? On Italy ? Let her not forget, he added, the example of the Crimea, for which independence under the protection of Russia was but the prelude to complete subjection. My reply was that Albania relied neither on Italy nor Austria, but on the rights of the Albanians to exist and have a nationality of their own, as well as on the duty of the Powers to respect nationalities. I added that Turkey could not but be a bad advocate of the cause of free nationalities, and that Albania would prefer to defend her cause herself, but that, on the other hand, when the final solution came, she would do all she could to prevent the new situation from being an obstacle to good relations with the Sublime Porte. So ended what I may call the first candidature to the Albanian throne, which was followed by others that had no weight at all with the Albanians, who placed their confidence in the Great Powers.

In spite of this attitude of the Porte, and of the menace of the Turkish Armies, which still occupied a portion of the country, we spent our time in organising the administration and maintaining order in the portions left to us. The silence of the Great Powers and their indifference in face of Serbia's invasion and devastation of our land, at the same time that Greece was blockading and bombarding the town of Valona and the littoral, disgusted us. A little later, the Greek fleet having cut the cable which was the only channel of communication with the outer world, we were completely isolated and deprived of all knowledge of what was taking place beyond our borders.

One evening, towards the end of March, 1913, we learned that a vessel flying the British flag had anchored in the port and announced that the blockade was suspended. We were naturally delighted with the news. Next morning I learned that this vessel was the yacht of the Duc de Montpensier (younger brother of the Duc d'Orléans), and a little later a messenger came to me from the Duke carrying a letter in which His Highness informed me of the object of his visit, namely, his desire to become a candidate for the throne of Albania. There followed an invitation to lunch on board the yacht. I accepted, and after luncheon the Prince and I had a long conversation. He confided to me his intentions very frankly. I assured him I was happy and flattered, both for myself and on behalf of my country, that a Prince of the French Royal house should aspire to the difficult but honourable task of reigning over Albania. But I was forced to add that, as the blockade had kept us in total ignorance of what was our exact situation with regard to the European Powers, we regretted we were not able to take the decision, even if it were one in conformity with our wishes.

Next day His Highness came to pay us a visit at Valona. He made a tour of the town, in which he was able to notice the excellent impression he himself made—a sympathy which later caused all the more regret to the people and myself. I left with the Prince on his yacht on April 1st, 1913, for the purpose of conferring with the Powers. He left me at Brindisi, and continued his voyage to Venice. I went successively to Rome, Vienna, Paris, and London. No understanding had been come to and no decision taken on the question of this candidature, which would have been so welcome to the Albanians; and there the matter ended.

My object in making this journey was to fight the cause of the territorial integrity of Albania with the Powers, but especially in London, where the Conference was deliberating on the settlement of the Balkan question. I also wanted to hurry on the selection of the future Sovereign, which would help to ensure the stability of the national Government and remove all internal difficulties which the continuance of provisional conditions necessarily engendered.

In Vienna Count Berchtold, in our first interview, allowed me to perceive how slight was the hope that Albania would be permitted to preserve her territorial integrity, in spite of her rights and in spite of the efforts he had himself made. It was the first painful blow to me, but worse was to come, for on the day when I left Paris for London came the news of the surrender of the town of Scutari by Essad Pasha to the Montenegrins. This disaster, which took place while the fleet of the six Great Powers was manœuvring before this port in order to force King Nicolas to raise the siege, jeopardised the integrity and almost even the existence of Albania. The question of the candidature to the throne was by this fact necessarily relegated to a secondary place, and all my efforts had to be devoted to the territorial question.

On my arrival in London the same evening, I was happy to find myself again in the sympathetic atmosphere to which I was accustomed there, and I gathered renewed strength for my political struggle for the rights of the peoples of the East. The sincere sympathy shown by the British press and people towards our national cause, and the kindly welcome extended to me by Ministers and Statesmen of this great country, led me to hope that our indisputable rights, which were in no way incompatible with the political interests of Europe in general, or of our neighbours in particular, would be acknowledged by the Conference. Never was a nobler task offered to the Great Powers; never was a solution so necessary; and never had we had such hopes of obtaining it as at this moment, when the Powers were for the first time called on to form a Congress, whose task was not only to conciliate opposed interests, but also to act as an international High Court of Justice.

Of all the Balkan questions treated at this Conference, in my view the foremost, the most interesting, and, above all, the most eminently European, was that of Albania.

We thought it possible to hope that a people so worthy of interest by reason of its antiquity, its valour, and the services it had rendered to Europe, first by defending it against the invasion of the Turks, and then by resigning itself to a docile submission when it had become the pivot of European equilibrium, might have been allowed to become master in its own house and to retain its national independence. The Albanians, delivered from the Turkish yoke, of which they had for centuries been less the instruments than the victims, would have been happy to recover their liberty and independence, and therewith the repose of which they stood in such great need. They had no other claims to make, no other pretensions to put forward. They desired that the work of restoration should take place for all the Balkan peoples as for themselves, that hatred and envy should cease, that all legitimate rights should become sacred, and every unjust ambition or enterprise meet with its condemnation in a guarantee of solidarity on the part of the Great Powers. Sure of the justice of our claims, we awaited with entire confidence the verdict of the Conference of the Powers.

But the sympathy shown to me in my mission was the only consolation offered to Albania's broken heart when we learned the decision which the Conference of London had taken. More than half my country's territory had been attributed to Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece. The most flourishing towns and the most productive parts of the country having been taken away, Albania was reduced almost to its most arid and rocky portions. Thus plunged again into deep depression at seeing the future of our reborn country so darkened, we were comforted by being told that we had had to be sacrificed to the general interests of Europe. Resigned, but not despairing, I returned to Albania buoyed up by the single hope that more favourable conditions would at some future time permit Albania to realise her legitimate desires.

On my return to Valona in June 1913, the Provisional Government redoubled its efforts to organise the country and maintain order. It was a task which might well have seemed impossible, but was facilitated by the Albanian character, whose patience, foresight, and unflinching patriotism in the midst of all these complications and anxieties cannot be too highly praised. It was thanks to the virtues of this race in a country of which the frontiers were still undetermined, where the political statutes promised by Europe were awaiting their fulfilment, and where a frantic propaganda was carried on with the object of provoking trouble—it was thanks to these virtues that my Government succeeded in bringing stability to the State and assuring it a normal administration.

But despite the satisfactory results in the present, the future was dark and uncertain so long as the question of the future Sovereign remained unsettled. I therefore addressed a pressing appeal to the Powers in the following terms:

"If the Provisional Government of Albania, which has for eleven months been struggling with innumerable difficulties, has been able to maintain order and relative tranquillity in a country harassed on all sides by enemies who have sworn its destruction, it does not claim for itself the merit, which in fact is due only to the patriotism and the resignation of the Albanian people.

"But this provisional state of affairs cannot be continued indefinitely without encountering insurmountable difficulties. We believe we have reached the extreme limit of the people's patience, and we hasten to submit to the consideration of your Government the unanimous wish of the people and the Government for the designation and enthronement of the Sovereign, whose mere presence will suffice to unite all classes of the population in the work of consolidating Albania and organising her administration.

"In the hope that the guaranteeing Powers will take our request into serious consideration, the Provisional Government would be ready to take any steps necessary to hasten the happy result which Albanians await with such impatience."

It was a short while after this telegram had been sent that the name of the Prince of Wied was first mentioned in connection with Albania, vague rumours concerning his candidature being spread about. These rumours soon became more definite, in a way that recalled a curious campaign started on behalf of Prince Ahmed-Fuad, of Egypt, by the *Zeit* of Vienna; in this case the propaganda was launched in the form of a highly dithyrambic article in the *Oesterreichische Rundschau* (also published at Vienna) over the famous pseudonym of the Queen of Roumania. "Carmen Sylva," more poetess than ever, after having evoked Albania vainly clamouring for a Sovereign, in the style of a recitative of the "Nibelungenring," proposed to her as guide the scion of an ancient race dwelling on the Rhine. She then gave the genealogy of the Prince of Wied, and his history since his childhood. The prospect of confiding the destinies of Albania to this unknown celebrity did not particularly enchant me, but what troubled me more was the propaganda that began openly in favour of this candidature, in which money and presents were distributed with cynical effrontery. I asked for official information as to this candidature, and, being informed that it was not under consideration, I no longer hesitated to take rigorous measures against the propaganda or to expel the agitators. But, though the reply to my question was so emphatically in the negative, destiny had doubtless willed otherwise, since I was officially notified a little later that the six Powers had come to an unanimous decision regarding the choice of Prince William of Wied, and that nothing remained except to ratify it by the formality of a popular election. The Albanian people, unshakenly confident in the decisions of Europe, sent their votes at once to the Provisional Government, which communicated the result to the Powers.

However, though all was arranged, the Prince of Wied gave no sign, at any rate in the direction of Albania. We expected him to arrive every day. His departure was announced, but he did not arrive. These inexplicable delays were utilised by the Young Turks, who recommenced with even greater energy than before their campaign in favour of a Turkish Prince. I then appealed to the Commission of Control, begging them to draw the attention of the Powers to the urgent need for the enthronement of the new Sovereign. In case particular reasons were delaying the arrival of the Prince, I asked that a Commissioner should take over the Government in his name, or that the Powers should instruct the Commission itself to assume authority on their behalf. In my opinion some such arrangement was the only way of straightening out the internal difficulties and terminating the intrigues which tended to cause disorder in the country. My request was at last approved by the Powers, and the delegates came to notify me that they were authorised by their respective Governments to assume the power if I maintained my view on the advisability of this step. The following protocol was signed on the spot :

" This 22nd of January, 1914, the International Commission of Control has met in the presence of His Excellency Ismail Kemal Bey. The President of the Provisional Government, being persuaded that the only means of terminating the condition of disruption and anarchy ruling in the country is to constitute a single Government for the whole of Albania, and that in the present circumstances this end can only be attained if he places the power in the hands of the International Commission of Control representing the Great Powers, has repeated the request that he has already made to the International Commission of

Control, in the presence of the Ministers, to take over this task and accept the placing of the power in their hands. The International Commission of Control pays homage to the patriotic sentiments which have dictated the actions of His Excellency Ismail Kemal Bey, accepts this delegation of power, and, duly authorised by the Great Powers, assumes the administration of Albania in the name of the Government it represents.

"Valona, January 22nd, 1914."

Signed: "Ismail Kemal, Nadolny, Petrović, Krajewski, Harry Lamb, Léoni, Petriaew."

As soon as I had handed over the power to the Commission, I left for Nice in order to take a well-earned rest. I naturally followed from this distance with intense interest the march of events in my own country. It was not long before I learned—and I did so with great pleasure—that the Prince of Wied had at last made his solemn entry into Durazzo. I was, however, extremely annoyed that he had chosen for his capital one of the towns which was the least appropriate for the Royal residence, and the numerous disadvantages of which I had already pointed out, disadvantages which had been understood and recognised by the Foreign Office in London. But for the moment this dark spot disappeared again from the horizon, and I did my best, in the bottom of my old Albanian heart, to look forward with hope to the new era. After long and cruel years of waiting, after so many alternations between hope and disappointment, I tried to forget my own impressions, and suppressed any latent disposition towards anxiety, thinking only of the thrilling spectacle of our first king setting foot upon the sacred soil of my Fatherland, and of the imposing fleet which the six Great Powers gave him as an escort. My gratitude went out to Europe, which had confirmed Albania in her national existence by thus giving her a Sovereign that she had herself chosen.

It was only later that I learned the details of this memorable day. The Prince of Wied was accompanied by the Princess, his wife, and their children. His Court consisted of a marshal and a doctor (both Germans), a private secretary (an Englishman), and two Ladies of Honour. His bodyguard, which one might have expected to find of some importance, consisted of a couple of rather ferocious dogs. On board the vessel which brought him the Prince had the 10,000,000 francs which Austria and Italy had advanced him in anticipation of the 75,000,000 which the other Powers had not yet decided to pay. He was received with enthusiastic acclamations by the population, while salvos of welcome were fired in the port. His first act, even before disembarking, was the nomination of Essad Pasha as Minister of War and first general of Albania, and Essad accompanied the new Sovereign on shore.

William of Wied's short reign, which was richer in grotesque episodes than in incidents tending to the reorganisation of a renascent State, displayed the little care that the Powers had taken in the choice of this Sovereign for a country whose happiness depended on a fortunate selection. We had hoped that the tact and wisdom of the Prince might have balanced the losses in territory that we had sustained, and that his advent might give a great impulse to the prosperity of the country. Instead of that, the situation became more and more complicated, and in a short while grew actually critical. One morning I received a short telegram from Valona which gave me cause for absolute consternation. The house of Essad Pasha had been bombarded and the Minister himself thrown into prison. This brief intelligence, without further explanation, seemed to me so extravagant that for the moment I refused to believe it. I hurried to the Austrian and Italian Consuls at Nice, and got them to telegraph urgent messages for me to Rome and Vienna in order to get confirmation of this news, if true, and to discover its meaning. The reply I received left no further room for doubt. A little later I learned the details of the affair from other sources.

I had always foreseen that Essad Pasha would find himself in an extremely awkward position at Durazzo. This town, of less than 5,000 inhabitants, had been the centre of the intrigues and hostility against the candidature of Wied as a European Prince, as well as of the revolt of Essad against the Provisional Government. Essad, who had suddenly, by means of a suspicious *volte-face,* been promoted Minister of this same Prince who was so undesirable to his compatriots, could only meet with unpopularity and contempt. The feeling against him grew rapidly more bitter. The popular demonstrations throughout the country assumed a threatening character ; but, instead of trying to calm the people, when this agitation was at its height, the Prince met them with cannon. Instead of dismissing his unpopular Minister in a regular and legitimate manner, the Prince, acting under some influence which I am unable to fathom, again had recourse to violent measures and adopted a line of action unprecedented in the annals of government. Essad's house being blockaded and bombarded, his wife appeared at a window shaking a sheet as a flag of truce. The bombardment ceased, the Italian Minister intervened, and, thanks to him, Essad Pasha was able to leave without incurring further danger. Guarded by sailors, the family left and were put on board the Austrian guardship, from which they were transferred to the Italian *stationnaire,* on which Essad sailed for Europe after giving his word of honour not to return to Albania.

In view of these extraordinary happenings I considered it my duty to return at once to Valona. Just as I was going to take the train at Nice, the Italian Consul came to me with a telegram from the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, San Giuliano, in which he asked for my opinion on Albanian affairs and on the measures that ought now to be adopted, as the situation was becoming more and more alarming. He asked me to discuss the matter with him, and accordingly I went to Rome, where San Giuliano and I came to an understanding as to the measures to be adopted.

At Valona, where, as soon as I arrived, I learned the details of what had taken place, I also found out that Durazzo was surrounded on all sides and no communications were taking place between it and the rest of the country. The supreme authority and jurisdiction of our Mbret was thus confined to this small and insignificant town. A few days later I left for Durazzo with fifteen notables of the district, in order to submit our views on the situation, which were in agreement with those of San Giuliano, to the Prince. In a *tête-à-tête* interview which I had with him, I told him the conclusion we had come to and the measures we deemed necessary. The Prince impressed me as having no proper idea of the state of affairs, and as being oblivious of the exceptional gravity of the moment. He seemed incapable of making an observation or putting a question arising from his own personal thought. While I was explaining the different ways that might be adopted to get him out of his difficulties, he never once asked me how I thought of putting them into practice.

The next day the Prince received the fifteen notables from Valona. He did not let us leave, however, without giving some sign of his solicitude for the country. A meeting of all the Albanian chiefs then in Durazzo was called at the Palace. The Prince opened it himself with a few words in French, explaining why he had summoned us, and inviting us to give our opinions personally on the situation of the country. We had had no preliminary discussion, as is usual when one is called upon to give opinions in such circumstances, but we did as he wished, I myself speaking first instead of concluding the series of speeches, as I ought to have done in view of my position.

The Prince thanked us, and said that, when he had had our remarks translated and had studied them, he would inform us of his decision. We waited for several days, but, as no further communication reached us, we returned to Valona.

In view of the aggravation of the general situation of the country and the evident incapacity of the Government at Durazzo, a public meeting of the inhabitants of the town and district, as well as of refugees from other parts of the country in the hands of the enemy, was held in the Grande Place of Valona, with a view to taking measures to save the country. After a long discussion it was decided to form a Committee of Public Safety, under my presidency. We informed the Powers and the Prince of this decision, in an address which stated that representatives of Valona and a dozen other places had met and voted the formation of a Committee of Public Safety with the object of asking the guarantor Powers and the Prince to transfer the Government provisionally to the International Commission of Control, as representing the Great Powers, and to take all measures that the circumstances demanded. The message, signed by thirty delegates, appealed to the justice of the Powers, and begged them to entrust the Commission with this task without delay, adding that it was "the only measure in our opinion that can keep the legitimate Sovereign on the throne, ensure national unity and territorial integrity, and save from destruction more than 100,000 human beings who, fleeing from fire and sword, had left their burnt and devastated homes and taken refuge in the only corner of Albania which remained free, the town of Valona and its neighbourhood."

I have reached the last moments of this painful and futile reign. Shut up, as I have said, in his unlucky capital, the Prince had lost all authority, and his sovereignty was non-existent. There remained none of the ten millions that had been advanced to him and which he had stupidly wasted on such things as the creation of a Cour de Cassation (High Court of Appeal) when there were not even Courts of Law; the appointment of inspectors of public education in a country where there were no schools; and the maintenance of Ministers appointed to foreign countries who calmly remained at home. Though he sent his Minister of Finance to Rome to obtain fresh subsidies, both Rome and Vienna turned a deaf ear. Like a speculator whose business has failed, William of Wied realised that there was nothing left for him to do but to depart. The great war had begun, and was soon to cover the whole of Europe. The fleets of the Powers left Durazzo to the mercy of chance, and the Prince followed them on a small Italian yacht that had been left at his disposal. In spite of their experiences in these three months, my countrymen watched him depart with sadness, as if he were a hope that was perishing, a dream fading away. He had done nothing towards trying to understand them. He had not made a step to reach their hearts, which had been so confidingly opened to him.

It only remains for us now to await the day when the representatives of civilisation and humanity will unite and decide on recognising our rights, which have so far unhappily been disregarded on the sole plea of trying to avoid that which was inevitable. We are convinced that a measure of justice accorded to us will be of advantage not merely for ourselves, but also for those who sought for their own aggrandisement in our destruction. The reconstitution of the Balkanic *bloc* and the guarantee of its independence will be one of the most efficacious factors for the peace of the East and of the world. This Balkan edifice can only be consolidated with and by the consolidation of Albania, which forms its fourth supporting column.

APPENDIX

(Note 1. Chap. xvi. page 273.)

MEMORIAL PRESENTED TO HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE SULTAN BY ISMAIL KEMAL BEY, FORMER GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF TRIPOLI, DATED FEBRUARY 12/24th, 1312/1897

YOUR Imperial Majesty will remember that on my return from Beyrouth, I presented to you a long memorial in which I made it clear that the policy that had been adopted in the relations with Foreign Powers and in the internal administration of the country, was leading the Empire into grave danger.

I pointed out in that document that proceedings which were unworthy of a great Empire, as well as the indifferent attitude of the Great Powers, which was represented to Your Majesty by complacent courtiers as a great political success, constituted in reality a complete condition of isolation for the Empire, which was tantamount to suicide. I pointed out in the clearest manner that the bad administration ruling in the provinces brings discredit on the authority of the Throne and ruin on your subjects of all classes.

The most important point in this memorial was the question of Egypt, which ought above all others to occupy the thoughts of Your Majesty, since Egypt, from which spring the sacred rights of the Caliph of Islam, brings to the Ottoman Sultan his spiritual authority over the Mussulman people and gives him the prestige and moral position he enjoys with the nations interested in Oriental affairs.

Your Majesty having recommended me to submit to you the different ways of settling this question, at the same time as my own observations, I showed in a number of reports and memoranda how and by what means a proper settlement could be arrived at which would secure the sacred rights and the special interests of the Ottoman Empire.

Although my advice and my suggestions at the time attracted Your Majesty's attention, and although they were made at a moment when others interested in the Egyptian question were evincing a disposition to adopt a policy of conciliation, yet, I know not for what reason, these suggestions tending to a settlement of the Egyptian question and other matters which I had pointed out to Your Majesty, ceased to engage your attention and were forgotten. Thus some four years of precious time have been lost.

When the effects of the bad administration and of the corruptness of the administrators became self-evident, provoking indignation throughout the civilised world, and causing the Great Powers to intervene, the misfortunes began which I had predicted. Then I intimated loyally to Your Majesty that the most sacred duty of a far-seeing Sovereign who loved his people, and his surest policy, was to meet the prayers and the griefs of his subjects half-way, to widen their liberties of thought and action, to conciliate their clashing interests, and to give them a right to a voice in the government of the country proportionate to their capacity and the needs of the moment.

I also drew Your Majesty's attention to the exact nature of the report proposed by the Ambassadors of the Powers, which contained their confidential advice with regard to reforms in the vilayets in which Armenians formed a certain proportion of the population, before such reforms were presented to the Government. I pointed out in the most pressing language the need of immediately carrying out serious and general reforms, which would be of advantage to all Your Majesty's subjects, instead of special reforms which were going to be imposed on us. I showed Your Majesty how, forestalling the Ambassadors, you might avoid all foreign intervention and win the sympathy and affection of all your subjects. These recommendations and suggestions were not favourably received by Your Majesty, who considered them to be tricks of treachery rather than the warnings and advice of a faithful subject whose opinion and judgment were worthy of the confidence of his Sovereign.

As a fact, it was supposed that all this was a subterfuge dictated by someone to serve certain political ends. But as my reputation for loyalty and for tenacity of purpose was such that it could not easily be upset by the evil insinuations of a clique who were deceiving Your Majesty, and as I knew that the justice of my allegations would be verified by the facts, I did not become discouraged, nor did my judgment lose its force or efficiency. I only regretted that no advantage had been taken of an opportunity which would probably not present itself again.

Your Majesty doubtless recognises now that my insistence and tenacity (which have indeed reached the height of audacity) in putting before you a view of the exact situation, is the result of my sincere desire to arrive at a means which may assure the salvation of Your Majesty and of your Empire. Your Majesty is at heart convinced, I am sure, that if the reforms the necessity of which is now evident had been carried out at that time with conviction and sincerity, the independence of your Empire would not have been threatened, and the provinces would not have been the scenes of carnage and pillage.

I beg Your Majesty not to believe that this dissertation on the events of the past year and this recapitulation of my own recommendations have for their object merely to place myself in opposition to Your Majesty. I am sure that as master of this land, and Padishah of the Empire, and as the father of all Ottomans, Your Majesty has no other desire than the contentment and prosperity of your subjects, the happiness and glory of your Empire.

But it is also a fact beyond dispute that in spite of Your Majesty's desire to accomplish the happiness of your people, the application and carrying out of your plans, full of wisdom though they may be, remain none the less discouraging to your subjects, and most saddening for your faithful servants. The iradés, laws, and regulations promulgated during the twenty years of Your Majesty's reign, if they were collected, would form a complete code containing the best formulas of good government, and affording solutions for all administrative and juridical problems. Unhappily, these iradés have been trammelled with such conditions and precautions, and their application has been confided to such incapable agents, that Your Majesty's good intentions have remained sterile and the country has reaped no benefit whatsoever.

Even before your accession the glory and good name of Your Majesty were well known to all your subjects. The contents of the *Hatti-Humayoun*,[1] published just before your accession, were considered by all classes of the people, high and low, as a special pledge of salvation, and Your Imperial Majesty's accession was regarded as the opening of an era of grandeur and splendour for the people and the Government. The Constitution, and the *Hatti-Humayoun*, by which it was promulgated, showed how well Your Majesty recognised the defects of the arbitrary régime and the unhappy effects resulting from it.

The benefits and the advantages of a Constitutional régime have elsewhere always been obtained as the consequence of sanguinary revolutions. Your subjects, thanks to this clear and enlightened judgment shown by Your Majesty, have not needed to have recourse to such risings in order to obtain similar advantages. This was one more sign showing that Your Majesty was justly chosen to play the glorious rôle of reformer and acquire the title of one of the most virtuous masters of the world.

Thus the opening of Your Majesty's reign aroused the admiration of the whole world, as well as of your own subjects; it gave rise to the hope that a splendid future was in store for the Empire. But, unfortunately, the sequel was otherwise; our hopes were deceived by the disastrous years that followed.

When your descendants and successors come to compare the definite results obtained up to the present time, which are so full of contrast with the splendid promise of the beginning of your reign; when they seek for the mysterious causes of the disasters which have overwhelmed the Government and the people during the past twenty years, they will indeed be puzzled to explain such contradictions; they will know not how sufficiently to curse those who have been the causes of changes that have brought such misfortunes upon them and their interests. These people, in their efforts to attract Your Majesty's attention by calumniating their fellows, consider it a distinction to spy upon each other, and the trade of informer has become such a common one that a father denounces his son, brothers inform on each other. Corruption has become so general among all classes and has attained such lengths that the central administration, as well as the local governments, are in the hands of people utterly unworthy of acting as representatives of Your Majesty. They are the cause that the country is now almost without an honest administration, and without guarantees of good government. The soldiers, who are the defenders of the country, have lost all discipline. As to the Navy, it has become a field of exploitation for private interests, while the finances of the country are not only ruined, but the irregularity of their administration passes all imagination. One portion of the tax-payers, suffering from the late disorders, are quite unable to pay; the other portion, if not actually suffering, wait for a solution of the political crisis. This disorder and confusion would be enough to ruin the best established country, but as if that were not enough, the two successive revolutions have caused the most acute anxiety among the devoted subjects of Your Majesty.

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[1] Imperial rescript (*see* Chap. I.).

Your Majesty does not need to be reminded that there are two kinds of revolutions—one which is an armed rising against their Government of people who do not consider the disasters which may result from their acts; the other arises out of a passion that blinds the people and makes them resist the progress being followed by the Government which they wish to see changed. The causes of the first of this class of revolution are to be seen in the present state of affairs in Anatolia, in Crete, and in Roumelia; the causes of the second are in those who are now controlling the country's administration. A popular revolution may take place at any moment in any part of the Empire, and its motive and causes would not be hard to recognise. Instead of acting in time with justice and wisdom and taking into consideration the legitimate demands of the people in conformity with the requirements of the age, thus consolidating the authority of the throne by giving satisfaction to legitimate aspirations, the people's prayers have remained unanswered and the functionaries of the Empire, by their arrogant and insolent practices, only provoke discontent, which gives rise to recriminations. The errors thus committed are so numerous and recur so frequently that one is forced to the belief that they arise from intentions that are almost inconceivable—to ignorance, incapacity, or even treachery.

As uncertainty concerning the future as well as the hardships and general misery now existing render the regular recovery of the taxes impossible, recourse has been had to a so-called voluntary tax under the denomination of "military aid," but instead of its being voluntary, rigorous measures have been employed to enforce its payment. Can one consider such a measure a loyal act, since it must have suggested to the subjects of the Empire, already sufficiently anxious on account of the gravity of the situation, that it was proposed to begin a struggle against the six Powers and so prepare for war, and, on the other hand, to give the impression abroad that the Mussulmans were being excited against the Christian world?

My Sovereign master! You, who are acquainted with the most trifling quarrel between husband and wife in the most humble households, show that you ignore the dangers which to-day menace the future of your throne and the very existence of your Empire.

In refusing to give consideration and confidence to the loyal sentiments of friendship shown to you by a great nation whose numerous distinguished statesmen have rendered such striking services to the Empire, you have let yourself be influenced by the evil suggestions of wretched mischief-makers. The corruption in the administration and the weakness of the Government have tarnished the name and the glory of Your Majesty to such a degree that the Ottoman Empire stands in the eyes of the world to-day as a model of oppression and disorder. Your Imperial Majesty, who shrinks from sanctioning the execution of the most contemptible murderer, is to-day considered and generally referred to all over the world as a sanguinary monarch. Criticism and censure of the acts of Your Majesty form the subject of columns of matter in the press of foreign countries.

The most cultivated and enlightened men in Europe, as well as the publicists and statesmen, at their public and private meetings, discuss the affairs of the East in a most disparaging manner, and blame the acts of Your Majesty in unmeasured terms.

I do not need to explain to you how the continuance of this deplorable state of affairs has brought about general disgust in the whole civilised world. Its effects, of which proofs are already forthcoming, will be seen in the serious injury done to the prestige of a great sovereign like Your Majesty, who cannot but be gifted with the great virtues handed down from your illustrious ancestors and inspired from heaven itself. Nor shall I insist upon the evil all this causes to the Ottoman Empire.

To put an end to this state of affairs, the Great Powers will be forced to intervene and to proceed either to the dismemberment of the Empire, or to the improvement of the Ottoman administration. That they should have recourse to dismemberment seems hardly likely, because the changes that the European equilibrium has suffered during the last quarter of a century and the honest intentions of those of the Great Powers which, while pursuing their own political interests, have a preponderating voice in the European concert, would both be opposed. The second alternative is necessarily accepted by all the Powers as the only remedy for the existing situation. As regards the consistency and the harmony existing among the Powers, I admit that more than one of your counsellors seeks to deceive Your Majesty by trying to persuade you that there is a lack of agreement. I doubt not that they employ arguments to prove the value of their judgment.

Without venturing to discuss these judgments I can only say I am convinced that none of the Powers would in such a matter take any isolated action likely to damage their own interests. Your Majesty is aware that from the point of view of their special interests in the East, the Great Powers can be divided into three categories. In the first category are the Powers who, for their own national interests, seek the maintenance and the consolidation of the Ottoman Empire, which is still regarded as the fulcrum of the European equilibrium, and a guarantee for the preservation of the world power which they possess. In the second category of Great Powers are those which to achieve their national ideal of world domination are trying to encompass the destruction of Turkey and take possession of the countries dependent on her. As to the third class of Power, this has an interest in preserving the *status quo*. On account of their geographical position and the insufficiency of their influence, feeling that they would get no profit from the partition of the Empire, they would consider its possible disappearance as a disaster that might even affect their own existence. And if there exists a Power whose interest it would be not to maintain the European Concert, that Power would nevertheless cleave to it with the object of making use of it in the fulfilment of its own political designs. In continuing to follow the path which she has laid out for herself so as to attain her real aims, this Power would consider that time was her best ally, while she was advising Turkey to abandon her traditional policy started by the illustrious predecessors of Your Majesty, and so happily followed for a century by the great Statesmen of the Empire. This Power, which derives so much advantage from our repeated faults and the disorder arising out of them, would never initiate a movement that might endanger her own position or her world influence, and especially the position she has created for herself in the East. The Treaty of Hunkar-Iskellessi always serves as a lesson against seeking for immediate advantages.

If for a moment we should suppose it possible that one of the Great Powers should desire the dissolution of this Concert of the Great Powers, this desire could not be considered as a cause of congratulation, but on the contrary as an evil to the Empire. What one should hope for the Ottoman Government is that satisfaction might be given to the Great Powers and the civilised world by bringing reassurance to its own subjects by means of radical reforms, and by calming the public conscience through the abandonment of the mischievous policy so far pursued. Whatever may be the text or the tendency of the reforms drawn up and submitted by the Ambassadors to their respective Governments, one can, without knowing them, be sure of their actual substance.

Your predecessors were in the habit of entrusting the high posts of the Empire to the most capable men of their time in order to arrive at the best forms of policy. These Ministers, capable and honest as they were, and feeling the weight of their duty, devoted themselves to the task of reform; and, thanks to their wise policy, on the one hand the Empire gained in strength and the people prospered, and on the other hand the Empire in general won the confidence of the Western Powers. Whereas to-day Your Majesty entrusts the reins of Government to such as possess neither capacity nor dignity. Distinction nowadays is reserved for baseness and ignorance, while high character and virtue are no longer considered. It is the acts of your private counsellors which have provoked such difficulties as those in which the Empire and Your Majesty find themselves. High office having thus become the prey of persons without merit, the most intelligent of the young generation, in disgust, and many experienced heads have left the country.

The baseness of character of the men in favour gives the impression that the administration of the country is reserved for men who are incapable, whereas the honest and loyal acts of those who have incurred disgrace are sufficient proof that the Ottoman people have in their midst the necessary elements for an honest and respectable administration. The reforms proposed by the Powers can but include the entrusting of the administration of the country to men of tried value, who realise their duty and recognise the right of the people to take their part in the administration. As the bases of these reforms necessarily carry with them a certain restriction of the absolute power of the Sovereign, your faithful subjects, in their patriotism, will only obtain the strength to raise a supplicatory voice by appealing to the heart of Your Majesty, which is divinely inspired.

There remains but a short time in which to take counsel; not a moment should be lost. So far as the evil is local, remedies must be applied which will avoid the risk of poisoning the entire body of the State. The recent Cretan question is a glaring example. It is certain that if efforts are not made to find a swift and radical remedy of the most serious description, the flame of revolution will rise in all quarters of the Empire, and nothing will be able to extinguish it. Your Majesty must rely on the patriotism of your people, and entrust the fate of the Empire and its future to their charge, for their patriotism and confidence are stronger than armies and stabler than any fortress. Thus only will the administration be improved as well as the relations with foreign Powers, in a way to show that you appreciated the honour of being admitted into the Concert of the Western Powers.

As a fact, Your Majesty is gifted with a strength and activity that are almost superhuman. You have shown surprising perseverance in revising all the questions, small and great, of the government of the nation. In spite of that, instead of happy results having been arrived at, order and a satisfactory administration have been destroyed.

No Sultan can reign well who does not call on the aid and counsel of his subjects, and it is not necessary to go very far back in history to show this. Your grandfather and your father were the real regenerators and reformers of the Empire. The ardent desire of each of them, shown in numberless ways, was to revive the glory and splendour of the Empire, to assure the well-being of their subjects and the prosperity of the country. Of these two predecessors of Your Majesty, the Sultan Mahmoud was gifted with rare intelligence and great courage, while Abd-ul-Medjid possessed sweetness of character and kindness in a high degree. But Mahmoud, wounded to the heart by the defeat inflicted on him by a simple chief of Bashi-Bazouks, departed in consequence from his throne and from this life. The milder Abd-ul-Medjid not only forced his conqueror to beg his pardon, but reduced him to a simple Vali of a province, while furthermore he ended by imposing a terrible defeat upon the all-powerful Russia. Later, by a brilliant treaty, the equal of which has never been seen, he succeeded in getting his rights confirmed by all the European Powers.

The first of these Sovereigns counted on his sword and failed ; the second relied on the force of justice, and on the excellent results of that noble monument the *Tanzimat*, and he achieved a success which could not have been obtained by six hundred years of war.

The high reputation enjoyed by Abd-ul-Medjid and the general acclamation that greeted the *Hatti-Humayoun*, which was published and proclaimed at the beginning of his reign, showed how measures of justice are greeted throughout the Empire.

Since, then, there are recognised ways of rendering justice which you have inherited from your father, who held them by divine inspiration, it is obviously not necessary to seek for any other means of administering the country, nor is it necessary to call for the guidance and the intervention of foreign Powers.

What is necessary is to put an end to the disorders caused by notorious evils that have grown up during the past twenty years, to bring remedial measures to bear, and also to put into operation the Constitution which was announced and approved at the beginning of your reign. It is true that the changes that the country has undergone in these twenty years and the intellectual evolution of the Ottoman people justify certain modifications in this charter. But instead of this having been done, and changes adopted by degrees according to the teachings of experience, the charter has been left in abeyance under the pretext that there were portions of it that were not perfect and were to undergo changes in some indefinite future.

In concluding my remarks, I beg to propose to Your Majesty that you should immediately convoke a constituent assembly of the representatives of the people of your capital and provinces. This assembly will submit to Your Majesty the changes they deem it essential to introduce into the Constitution. When these modifications have been adopted, the new charter can receive the approval of Your Majesty and be promulgated by a special *Hatt*. I am convinced that this is the only way of remedying the evils of the present time. And I am sure that if when this revised Constitution is promulgated Your Majesty asks for the guarantees of the great Powers, as your illustrious father asked for them at the time of the promulgation of the *Tanzimat*, they will recognise the new régime and undertake to respect it in an abiding manner, so that the Sovereign rights of Your Majesty and the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire may be confirmed and assured.

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